THE ART OF BALL POINT

MATT ROTA

EXPERIMENTATION, EXPLORATION, AND TECHNIQUES IN INK

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THE ART OF BALLPOINT

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THE ART OF BALL POINT

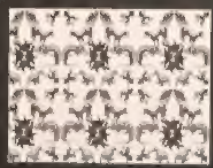
MATT ROTA

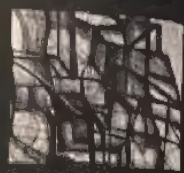
EXPERIMENTATION, EXPLORATION, AND TECHNIQUES IN INK

mass Highlight

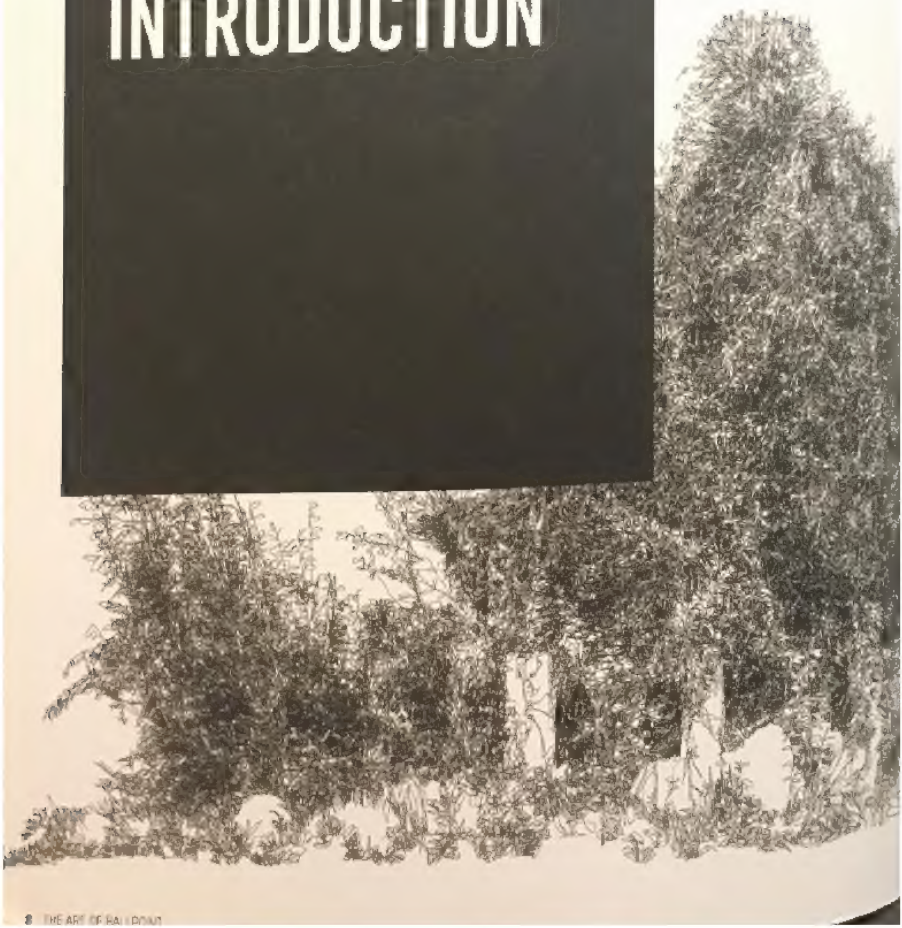
Not for hang
Still Life with repeats #1 & #2 2014
Ballpoint pen on paper
15 x 18 inches
(38.1 x 45 cm)

CONTENTS





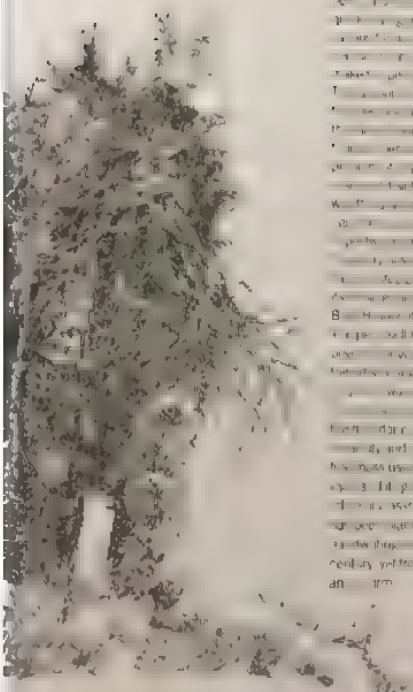
INTRODUCTION



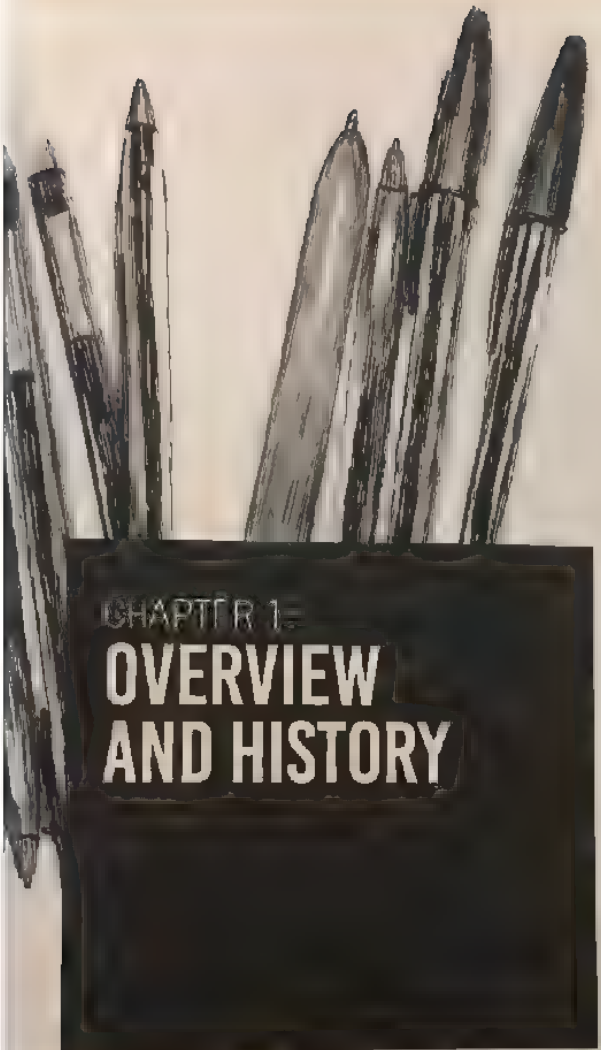
Korean Clothes
[illegible]

20 48 inches
(50 × 121.9 cm)

The gallery at the [illegible]



simple as a pen, possessing a singular fixed line and a limited color range—in short, a highly limited expressive range—can be interpreted in widely different ways, displaying the true



CHAPTER 1:
OVERVIEW AND HISTORY

The ballpoint pen's limitations dictate a certain style of drawing, a way of approaching the traditional craft of draftsmanship. By contrast, the history of the art of ballpoint has no clear narrative; there is little evolution of a common idea surrounding the pen that artists and enthusiasts congregate around. The history of its use in the world of art is a disconnected history, appearing largely in isolated instances.

THE BALLPOINT AS A MEDIUM FOR ARTISTS

The first sign that artistic consideration given to the ballpoint was by the Argentinian Futurist Lucio Fontana. At the [illegible] World War [illegible] Fontana was living in Italy where he was influenced by the popular Italian Futurist movement. Futurism as an artistic movement focused on ideas of technology, motion, and industrialization across a wide range of mediums. After the war started, Fontana fled back to his home in Argentina. It was there that Fontana came in contact with Biro's new pen and he began using it in preliminary drawings for future works.

Fontana's own ideas about art were rooted firmly in abstraction. He developed the concept of spatialism, based on the idea that matter should be transformed into energy to invade space in a dynamic manner. He believed artists should take advantage of new technologies man-made possible by scientific progress. He used many new mediums for the first time, such as television and black lights. The use of ballpoint pen can be seen in this light in relation to his work and through him has developed an association with alternative artists and works concerned with Futurist thinking.

The pen was marketed by Biro as the pen of the future. Reynolds first pen was the Reynolds Rocket, evoking movement and excitement associated with progress and the future. An early BIC ad campaign referred to the pen as the "Atomic Pen."

Arte Povera, an Italian art movement of the 1960s, was much more relatable to the work of Fontana and other Italian artists of the generation. The Arte Povera group included the artist Alighiero Boetti, who would create many prominent works using the ballpoint pen. His use of the pen was not in conjunction with his other alternative materials. In his artwork, Boetti sought forms of expression

[illegible]

that detached his own hand as a tool to create a form of expression. An example of how he used ballpoint pen in his work was in a series of drawings including such as *Omaggio* (1974) and *Mappa Mondo* (1973–75), which consisted of a grid of many [illegible] pen. He preferred the ballpoint because [illegible] the uniformed quality [illegible] opposed to say, the idea of [illegible] attain the same [illegible] any specific [illegible]. The blue was a result of [illegible] the pen and [illegible] of the work's quality. Each drawing was delegated specific guidelines [illegible]. The drawings were carried [illegible] instruction but were actually executed by a team of assistants.

Other artists using the medium [illegible] era include Albert Baca [illegible] Dubuffet. Their interest was [illegible] mostly by the presence of [illegible] of the pen [illegible] Twombly [illegible] emerging. The significance [illegible] pen as a tool for artist work [illegible] was [illegible] own we establish [illegible]

With these artists, the ballpoint pen does not reveal something new in their work or do they use it to express something yet undiscovered in their own thinking. It should be important to note that all the artists mentioned so far used the ballpoint as an auxiliary tool. It was not the main attraction or focus of their work. It wasn't until the 1980s that various artists started making the ballpoint a central tool for their work. The artists Jan Fabre, Ill Lee, and Martin Kippenberger each has a unique take and approach derived from the medium, relying specifically on ballpoint's own properties. Fabre famously locked himself in a room for days, covering every inch of the space with ballpoint drawing (*The Bic-Art Room*, 1981) then later, he entirely cladded of a nineteenth-century castle in Belgium (*Hasselt Tholl*, 1990) overpowering the majestic structure with ballpoint blue. The castle cuts a stark contrast against the iconic, and utilitarian, blue ink.

Similarly, Lee finds elegance in the consistency of the pen's line and something of a meditative approach in the repetitive process of creating giant fields of blue from layering the simple restrained line of the pen, again elevating the simplicity to a spiritual relationship with the viewer. The clouds of blue envelope the viewer gently overpowering the audience in what can be seen again as a contradiction to the mundane context of the pen. And Kippenberger's Hotel drawings turn the mindlessness of doodles into deep interior explorations—intense abstraction of the artist's psyche. These codify the act of doodling and daydreaming as profound soul-searching activities. In each case the ballpoint pen displays the potential to reach far beyond its simplicity to scale the heights of human reflection. This work demonstrates the artist's desire to express profound states of exploration and expression using a common object of modernity, a novelty item designed for the consumer class.

A TRIANGULAR DESIGN

The base of a pen that allows the user [illegible] an interpretation of the mechanical process in the humble pen, the first pen that could hold its own ink. Though the Biro pen in many ways is the best in a line of [illegible] designs that started with the basic quill pen, the representation of the humble ballpoint is in its internal ink. The design of the ballpoint pen, however, is highly unique in its own right, and a complete break from the notion of a quill design. It is the [illegible] a better design of a [illegible]

HOW A BALLPOINT PEN WORKS

The ballpoint pen is [illegible] prominent, visible, and successful examples of a manufactured consumer product to come out of the postwar industrial age. The manufactured materials that constitute the pen include plastic for the barrel and ink cartridge (specifically, thermosetting plastic, or phenolic resin, a plastics that remain permanently hard after being heated, molded, and cooled), brass for the tip, brass or aluminum for the construction of the body, and tungsten carbide for the ball. Ink, the most distinct and important innovation of the ballpoint pen, is made up of 40 to 50 percent dye and is combined with lubricants, thickeners, and preservatives, all of which are dispersed in oleic acid, castor oil, and alkanamide plasticizer.

Brass is used because of its lightness and corrosion resistance; thermoplastic materials because of their hardness, but also their flexibility, and the tungsten carbide ball, where the tool's namesake comes from, is used for its resistance to wear. The surface of the ball is covered with thousands of tiny holes connected to tiny channels that allow the ball to pick up ink while it, as well as spread the ink across its surface. The ink is the key to the pen's success; the story of the evolution of the pen is largely the evolution of the ink itself. The ink is thick and dries quickly so as not to smudge, but it is not too thick that it will clog the pen or dry up in the tube.

The ball was designed as a way of pushing the ink off from the air, which will dry it, and as a way of preventing the ink from leaking. It also the object that delivers the ink to the paper. In most cases, gravity delivers the ink to the ball through in some cases, pressurized and spring-loaded piston designs are also used. Only the Fisher space pen is designed to be used in zero-gravity or even in [illegible]

A ballpoint drawing by its very nature is deliberated, not impulsive and as a result almost always cerebral. It requires of the artist a patience that a pencil or a brush does not demand.

WHY USE A BALLPOINT FOR ARTWORK?

For artists working in ballpoint today, the attraction is usually one of two things. The first reason, perhaps the most prevalent, is one of convenience. Ballpoint pens are the most prevalent writing tool around, and by their sheer presence alone they make themselves a tempting device.

However, this is a sort of passionless response. When the user is only convenience-driven, it speaks of none of the qualities of the pen as a tool of expression, only of the lack of anything else present at the moment of desire and inspiration. But this more convenience-driven concept is the secret power of the tool, or what the user may be unaware of. Imagine the lack of such abundance. A hotel room with no pen when one is at night, an idea is stirred, a bar where one's inspiration strikes, there is no pen. It's length that draws so easily on a napkin or paper, then imagine how many ideas would be lost without the pen. It is not just that the ballpoint supplies from imagination to reality without any effort. With this convenience, the path from abstraction to reality has less of the feel of breaking, like a boiling kettle or cup of water with which no one should ever be in a rush. The relativity of this convenience is so often taken for granted that the evolution of such abundance is elevated to a convenience, as going the following mechanically, [illegible]

The second reason for the use of ballpoint can at times be [illegible] to be obvious, not so much in the conscious mind of the artist, but can be seen in the work. The work and so speaks for itself. This reason is [illegible] in the constant flow of ink, the convenience of not having to sharpen, dip or refill the pen during the course of a drawing. The significance of this quality is often overlooked by artists born after the 1950s, when felt-tip and pens replaced fountain pens. The quality facilitates a frame of mind in artists, which, previously, [illegible] invention, would have been impossible. The frame of mind is an [illegible] focus, [illegible] drawing completely a type of meditation that is seen so [illegible] that comes from the pen.

This focus, together with the [illegible] to the thinnest marks, holds [illegible] drawing that demands focus. A ballpoint drawing, by its very nature, is deliberated, not impulsive, and as a result almost always cerebral. It requires of the artist a patience that a pencil or a brush does not demand.

[illegible] determine whether it is that the pen's limitations [illegible] artist, or that artists that prefer ballpoint are predisposed to a way of thinking that is sympathetic to the nature of the pen, but the result tends to be highly focused work. This is the most [illegible] allows people to get lost in their work. Whether it is a doodle, a sketch, a large-scale drawing the size of a wall or building. The drawing hand [illegible] a ballpoint pen is sheltered and focused [illegible] on the wrist more than the whole arm, and it is made even on a grand scale.

[illegible]

An art [illegible]

A tool that expr[illegible]
[illegible] and [illegible]

An attempt [illegible]
[illegible]

STATUS AS A TOOL

The attraction to the pen, beyond just its formal quality, has much to do with its status as a tool or art. There is no consistent view of pens as tools but multiple interpretations of the tool. There is a group of thought that comes from its status as a non-traditional art tool that has an outsider's status. People who associate with this band to relate to or are part of "outsider art" or "lowbrow movements." This can be reflected in the subjects these artists choose, such as tattoos or their interpretations of snapshots, [illegible] reproductions of sketches, graffiti designs, and other [illegible] subjects. The pen's association as a lowbrow also encourages artists [illegible] use it as a tool to interpret classical [illegible] lowbrow subjects, such as Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*.

The pen's status as an industrial-age tool or a product of manufacturing, is an attraction for others who view the pen as modern. The backlash can be seen as having associations with other forms of mechanical drawing tools, which negate personal expression in a minimalist sense by taking the ego out of the mark, forming a more perfect expression of clarity of the modern industrial age. It is a tool that expresses logic and restraint and thus makes it elegant.

For others, this a tool of nostalgia used by artists with a carefree mentality toward drawing. The pen in this way is synonymous with innocence, recalling a doodle made during a phone call or a way to distract oneself during a high school lecture by scribbling in the margins of a notebook. The art that springs from this impulse by a mature artist is an attempt to recall a lost or abandoned creative process.

[illegible]ORY OF THE BALLPOINT

The first ballpoint model was patented by the [illegible] American leather tanner and inventor John [illegible] who had intended the tool to be used [illegible] marking and drawing on his leather products. The problem with the original design was the [illegible] of the ball, which prevented it from [illegible] on delicate surfaces like paper. The ink [illegible] was a problem due to smearing.

After the initial patent was issued to Loud [illegible] than 350 patents on similar ball-type pen [illegible] issued during the following 30 [illegible], but none proved successful until Laszlo [illegible]ro's design, the problems always being with the ball size and ink viscosity. Ink was the [illegible] focus [illegible]'s design; he was the first [illegible] by using newsprint ink. His design required [illegible]-flowing ink that dried quickly, but not within the tube or on the ball. The ink is largely dye [illegible] rather than pigment based so as not to [illegible] the pen.

Laszlo Biro was born to a Jewish family in [illegible]. He sought the help of his chemist [illegible] brother Georg and secured the financial backing [illegible] business partnership of Andor Goy. The [illegible] set about developing the first functioning [illegible] of what would become the ballpoint [illegible]. Biro displayed his pen at the Budapest International Fair in [illegible]. A modified design, patented by Biro and Goy in 1938, is more or less [illegible] design still used today.

[illegible] the development of the pen was [illegible] political transition and turmoil in Europe that would eventually lead to World War II. By the end [illegible] 1939, anti-Jewish laws were going into effect [illegible] the Biro family to flee. The brothers [illegible] in Argentina and secured financing for [illegible] and a manufacturing plant.

[illegible] commercial pens were [illegible], and initially they were a failure. The [illegible] design, relying on a gravity delivery system, did not deliver ink accurately to the tip unless the pen was held perfectly upright, so creating a steady flow was problematic. This design was [illegible] with a capillary design. The ball was redesigned as a rough stainless steel ball, which gripped the paper better and better spread ink. This new improved model was marketed throughout the country with another, but still limited, success.

One of the initial customers the brothers [illegible] made in Buenos Aires was Harry Martin, a British accountant living in South America at the time. Martin was aware that at that time, the British Royal Air Force was having trouble with writing utensils at high altitudes; the fountain pen was prone to leaking, and the officers were looking for a new design good for keeping flight logs while in the air. Martin saw a potential solution in the ballpoint design. He met with the Royal Air Force representative in Buenos Aires, as well as the U.S. representative, whom upon seeing the pen had Martin flown to Washington to demonstrate it for the United States Air Force. From there he traveled to London to demonstrate it for the Royal Air Force. This led to the first major [illegible] ordering 30,000 pens.

Several innovators and manufacturers, including Eberhard Faber and Milton Reynolds, made improvements and refinements following the war.

[illegible] Biro was the company started in 1946 (at the time called Script PPA) by Baron Marcel Bich. The company would go on to produce iconic brands of disposable razors, lighters, and ballpoint pens. Between [illegible] and 1950, Bich would design the next [illegible] iteration of the ballpoint pen, adjusting materials and design to allow for a pen [illegible] eventually, that would be introduced to the U.S. market and sold for 19 cents apiece. Bich's innovation was to produce a high-quality pen in such great amounts as to keep the price as low as possible. It is said that Bich's pen can be sensibly one of the most successfully manufactured products of [illegible], with an estimated 14 million [illegible] each day, and 100 billion sold globally [illegible] 1950 (the hundred [illegible] September of 2006).

Bich's company would eventually become synonymous with low-cost, disposable, everyday products, such as the razor and the lighter, but the pen would be his most significant contribution to postwar [illegible] culture. The impact of this idea is more profound than it may seem today, but considering the pervasive and traditional [illegible] these objects to the point of near taboo, it's hard to overstate the ballpoint's effect on contemporary society. Case in point: the BIC Crystal is included in the Museum of Modern Art's permanent collection. Features of the design include the see-through tube, made to allow the ink level to be visible, the hexagonal body modeled after a pencil, and a small hole in the side of the body to equalize pressure inside the pen. Recent models of the pen also feature a cap with a hole in the top, designed to prevent suffocation in the event the cap is inhaled.

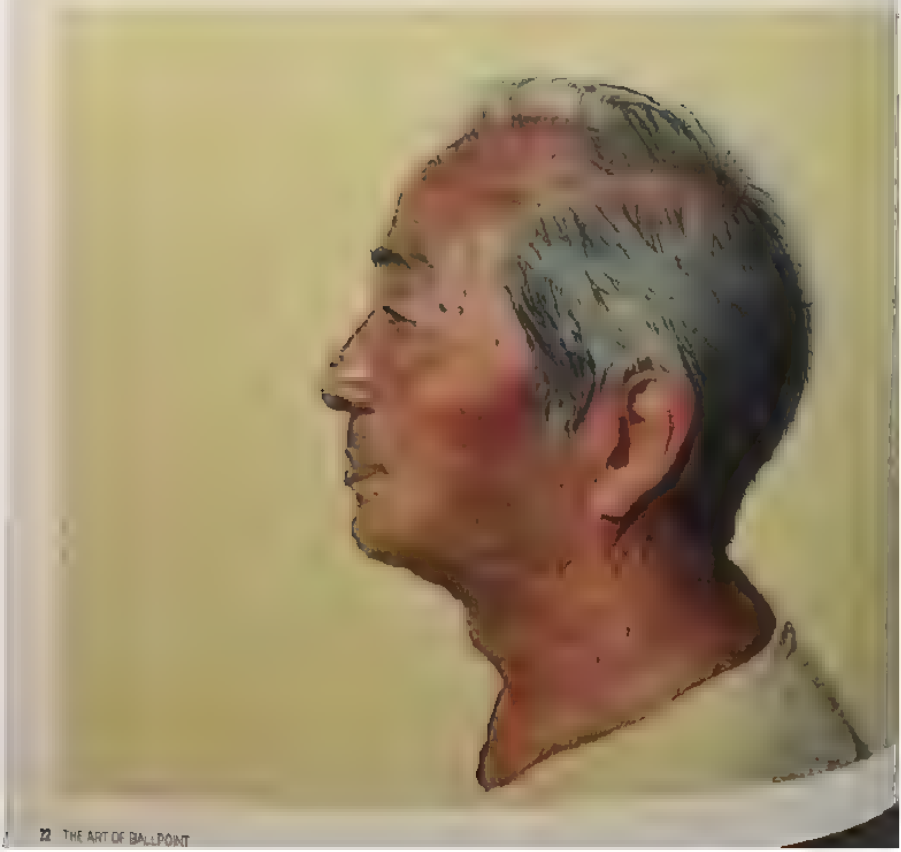
CHAPTER 2:
CONTEMPORARY CLASSICAL

This chapter includes artists who are part of the long tradition of western European classical drawing, using techniques of illusionism, line and crosshatching. The precision of a ballpoint lends itself well to the translation of these old traditions into a modern context by using a tool designed not so much for rendering as for technical precision and efficiency. These are artists using ballpoint primarily figuratively and using drawing techniques typically relegated to pencil, charcoal, or traditional pen and ink. They discover the figure through a combination of linear drawing and hatching for shadows and volume. Although these drawings reflect an observational point of view and capture a likeness to their subject, this technique should not be confused with photorealism or impressionistic realism. Instead, here the lines are used to create an illusion of form and volume. The result can be a somewhat idealized depiction rather than a photographic replication of the subject.

FEATURED ARTIST:

NICOLAS V. SANCHEZ

NICOLAS SANCHEZ BEGAN DRAWING IN BLACK INK AT HIS LEISURE WHILE ATTENDING GRADUATE SCHOOL AT THE NEW YORK ACADEMY OF ART. ASSIGNMENTS AND STUDIO TIME WERE DEMANDING. SO DRAWING IN A SKETCHBOOK ON THE SUBWAY OR ON A PLANE WAS A WAY TO RELEASE THAT PRESSURE AND CREATE SOMETHING THAT WAS NOT MEANT TO BE EXHIBITED. IT ALLOWED FOR A HEALTHY STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS



For Nicolas, ballpoint pen offers a sense of freedom. There is no preliminary pencil drawing. He starts with the pen and just continues drawing. "There's no taking it back," he says, "so why worry about it? It pushes me to become more disciplined and develop a sense of agility when working with ink." He also works more quickly in ink, finishing a drawing much faster than work in graphite or oil paint because of its permanent quality.

EXPLORING TECHNIQUE: COLOR

Even though the level of finish and description are similar from drawing to drawing, there is nothing cohesive about the start and subsequent process in each individual work.

Nicolas doesn't use a specific set palette of colors. He uses a variety of pens and brands from BIC to Parker to no brand pens "borrowed" from a bank counter, restaurant, or his grandma's house. He achieves a range of tone and color through the slow and meticulous layering of crosshatch mark making.

Most of his drawings are done in 3½ x 5½-inch (9 x 14 cm) Moleskine books because of the high-quality paper. He also works on paper with a similar tone as the paper found in Moleskines for larger individual drawings.

Nicolas considers his Moleskine books completed works just the same as his large-scale oil paintings. The books are displayed in galleries in a way that allows people to see all the drawings inside. He has separate sketchbooks for keeping less finished sketches, ideas for future work, thoughts, and thumbnails. These are the "sketchbooks" he takes everywhere.

"Everything is strictly done in ballpoint pen from beginning to end, without the use of any other mediums. In the past, I had experimented with using a white gel pen to separate the tone of the paper from the drawing, but now all of my pen drawings are done with only ball point pen."

The color of my work comes from personal memories," Nicolas explains "In my work, color reflects a time, a place, an event, a person. It's used in a traditional representational sense, but it sometimes serves as the main focus of a piece."

His drawings are built up with many layers of color and crosshatching. Sometimes the detail is so small, he has to revert to a mode of meditative pointillism.

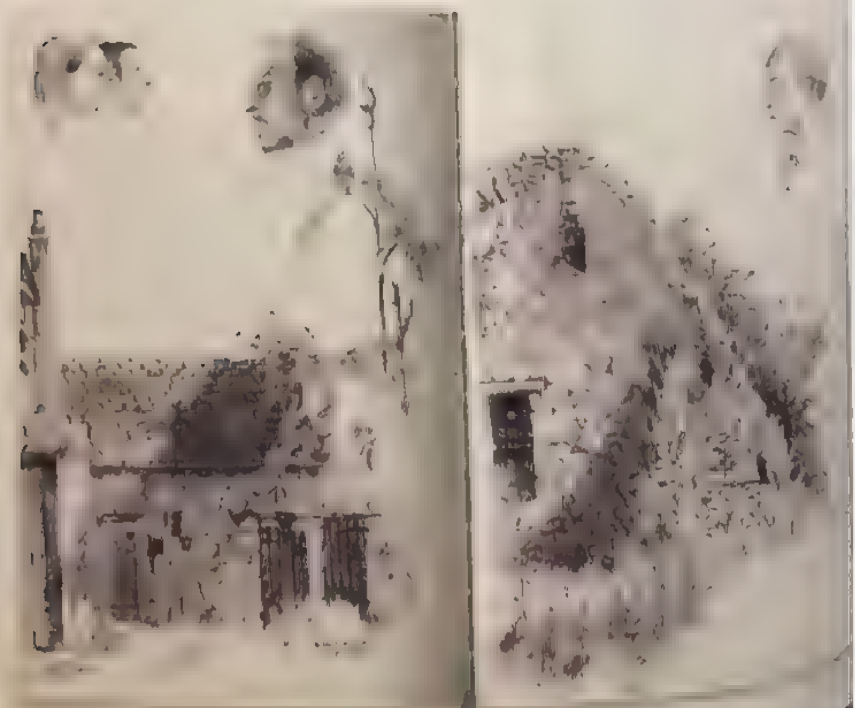
The Claim is the title of a book Nicolas recently completed focusing on Midwest American imagery, which is one of the themes he explores in his studio practice. It features rural imagery that includes animals, spaces, and landscapes, imagery that was a central part of the environment he was surrounded by growing up in Michigan.

Some of Nicolas's sketchbooks focus completely on portraiture. His fascination with specific individuals and his personal relationships with them are the fuel for these drawings. There are books he keeps that strictly consist of people met from around the world while on artist residencies. The portraits are consistently restricted to a profile view, simply because he favors the design and because the angle relates specifically to the subject of portraiture.

FEATURED ARTIST.

DINA BRODSKY

DINA BRODSKY IS PRIMARILY A PAINTER THOUGH DRAWING, PARTICULARLY IN HER SKETCHBOOKS, IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF HER CREATIVE PROCESS. AKIN TO A VISUAL DIARY DRAWING IN THEM IS A NECESSITY LIKE EATING AND SLEEPING. SHE'S HAD A SKETCHBOOK IN HER BAG EVERY DAY FOR THE PAST FIFTEEN YEARS OR SO IT'S ONLY IN BALLPOINT AND SHE CARRIES IT EVERYWHERE



The pen Dina draws with is always a Zebra ballpoint pen because it's the best brand she can find. A friend gave her one while she was still in school, during spring break at a coffee shop while they were drawing, and she's used the brand ever since. It's the only pen she's ever felt truly at home with.

Some of her drawings are done on white paper, others on toned paper. She tones her paper with a mix of watercolor and Chinese white gouache, which gives the watercolor a bit of opacity. She also uses the gouache for highlights when working on toned paper.

Because Dina is primarily a painter, her [illegible] research, or just fun, the thing she gets to experiment with when not working on more finished oil paintings. Occasionally, she will use her sketchbook drawings as preparatory sketches for more finished work, but most of the time they don't make it out of the sketchbook.

[illegible] paper
12 x 9 inches
(30.5 x 23 cm)

[illegible] ballpoint pen on [illegible]
6 x 9 inches
(15 x 23 cm)

Using toned paper for drawings is one way to help prevent overworking them, the same way she may fuss over a painting. The tone stops her from trying to capture the mid-tones with a pen.

EXPLORING TECHNIQUE: TONE AND SHADING

As a painter, Diana is [illegible] compulsive rendering and [illegible] overworking everything half to death. The drawings are the part of her practice where she can relax.

[illegible] drawings she will sort on paper toned with a watercolor wash. She will draw [illegible] working the drawing up to the eventual [illegible] the darks. The wash works as a mid-tone and she uses a fine brush and white gouache to work out the lighter areas and the highlights. Using toned paper for drawings is one way to help prevent overworking them. In the same way, she may fuss over a painting. The tone stops her from trying to capture the mid-tones with a pen instead. This makes her focus only on capturing the darkest tones with [illegible] The [illegible] tone are [illegible] highlights [illegible] the mid-tone.

[illegible] on paper
[illegible] 9 inches
[illegible]

[illegible] mixed media
[illegible] paper
[illegible]
15 x 23 cm)

The drawings *Pumpkins* and *Old House* were drawn using this method. Both were started with the intention of being more serious finished drawings than her other sketchbook works, and both were finished using photo reference. *Old House* was entirely from a photo, and *Pumpkins* was started from life (at the farmers' market in Union Square) but finished later from a photograph of the scene.

The drawings take anywhere from a few minutes for sketching people in cages or at airports to five or six hours for more finished drawings of churches and castles and other things. She'll stay in one location and draw as long as she can, stopping due to weather or time. For example, if it's start to rain, or she has lingered for five hours over a single cup of coffee while drawing the street in front [illegible] tailors as [illegible] when a drawing is done and a composition is complete. In other words, composition is not [illegible] But because [illegible] sketchbook drawing [illegible] [illegible] elaborate [illegible] judgment [illegible]

Dina's locations tend to be cycling stops when she is traveling or favorite drawing places, cafés, and neighborhoods when she is home in New York. Dina determines a location based on the presence of a subject she can spend several hours looking at in combination with a place she can sit for hours in relative comfort without being in anyone's way. Spending a few hours drawing in a place tends to turn it into a happy memory.

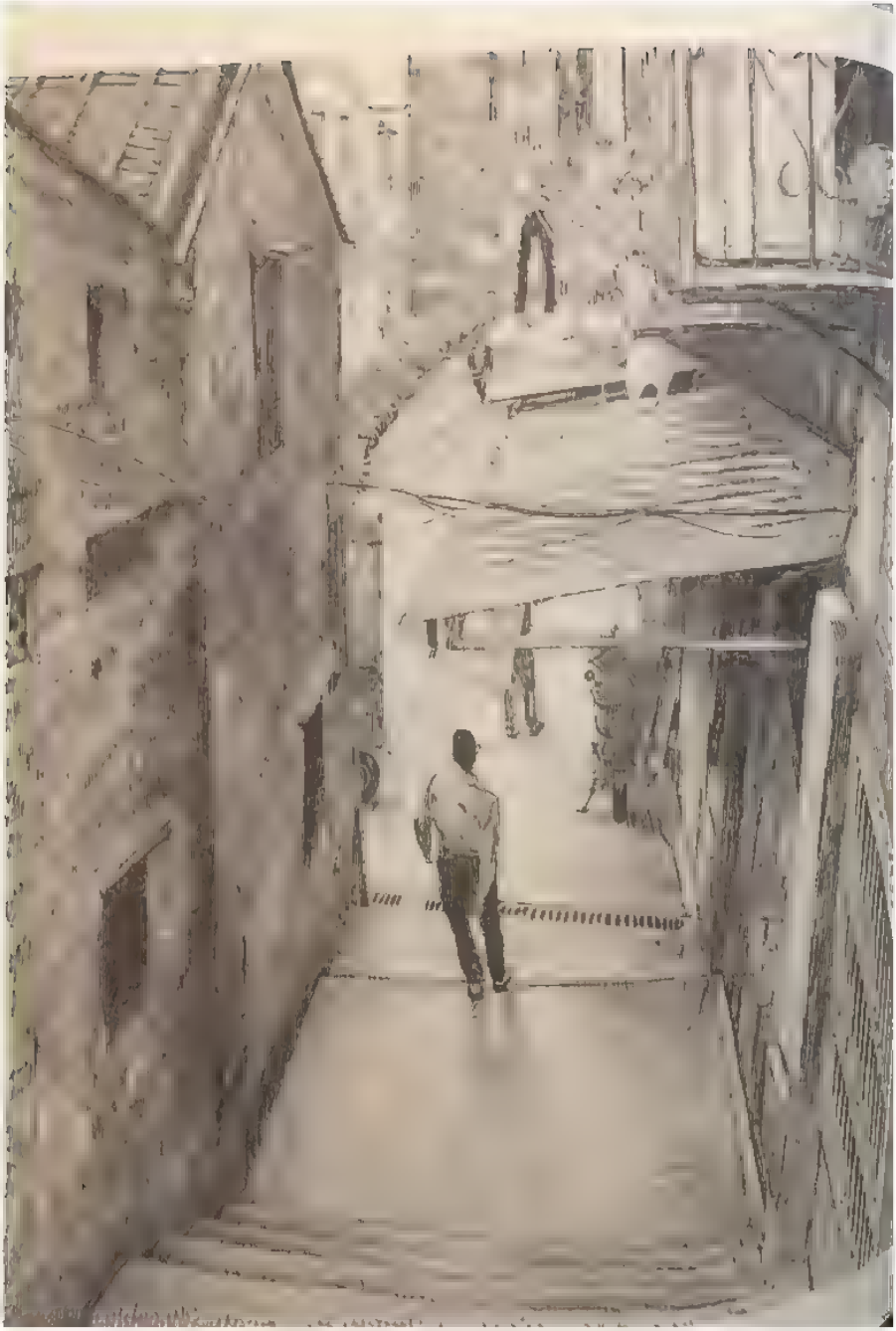
Her cycling trips are long distance treks mostly through western and northern Europe whenever she has a month to concentrate entirely on cycling, camping, drawing, and sketching. The areas she travels through have a long history still present in the weathered architecture. Dina has always been fascinated by old, deteriorating things and by what time and entropy will do to man-made objects, so the subject of architecture is a natural attraction for her.

While [illegible]

Image: Night girls.
Juni Dis
Dimensions, 1914
Ink on paper
7 x [illegible] inches
(18 x 28 cm

Page 34
Jule Francois [illegible] 4
Ballpoint pen on paper
[illegible] 1973
[illegible]

Page 34
Jule Francois, 2001
Ball [illegible] ink pen on paper
[illegible] inches
[illegible] x 23 cm



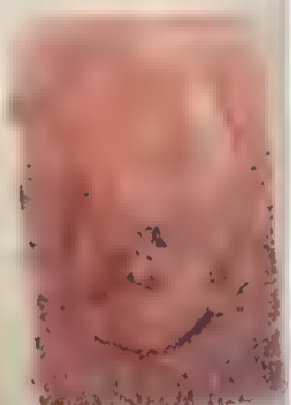
USING ONLY BALLPOINT TO DESCRIBE THE SHADOWS AND LIGHT IN AN IMAGE CAN LEAD TO OVER RENDERING AN IMAGE BECAUSE AN ENTIRE RANGE OF VALUE [illegible] PROCESS OF SIMPLIFYING THE DETAILS [illegible] ABSTRACT SHAPES. SEPARATING THE THREE STAGES OF VALUE INTO THREE SEPARATE MEDIUMS IMPLIES THE PROCESS TAKING THE BURDEN OFF THE PEN TO DESCRIBE EACH CLEARLY. IN THIS PROCESS, THE STAGES OF VALUE ARE EACH ASSIGNED A MEDIUM: THE DARKEST DARKS ARE DELEGATED TO THE PEN, THE MID-TONES TO WATERCOLOR, AND THE HIGHLIGHTS TO ACRYLIC.

EXERCISE:

DRAWING ON TONED PAPER

[illegible] drawing [illegible]

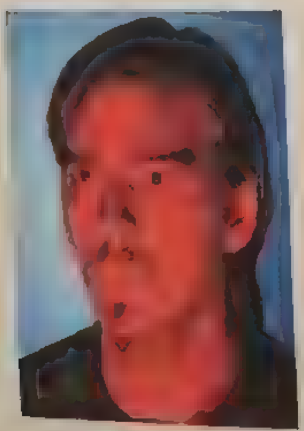
[illegible] across the page with no brushstrokes visible [illegible] completely. At this point it is [illegible] lightly sketch [illegible] the composition with pencil. [illegible] drawing is done lightly, the pencil [illegible] easily erased. Later if the pencil is [illegible] inked [illegible] will leave a texture on the page that will make [illegible] stage of the drawing more difficult. It [illegible] good at this stage to [illegible] where the highlights will be [illegible]

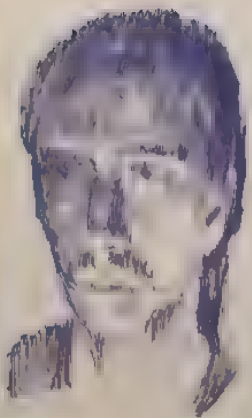


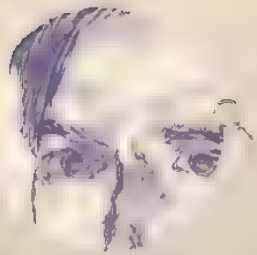
The next step is to begin [illegible] ballpoint. The [illegible] only capture the darkest [illegible] and [illegible] somewhat [illegible] than [illegible] subject [illegible] grounds.

EXERCISE:

TYPES OF SHADING







[illegible] lacking definition [illegible] hatching [illegible] vertically and diagonally [illegible] The [illegible] face [illegible] brought [illegible] forward [illegible] and feels [illegible]

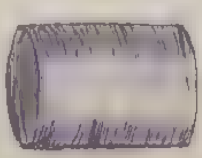
The same [illegible] this time defined by an outline is more structurally solid but less dramatic. The outline fixes the head in space, making it feel sturdier and more stationary. There [illegible] a sense of motion. However, the figure feels stronger [illegible] only, but also [illegible] the mood is very different from the first two even though they are drawn from the same reference. Each technique gives a different mood and personality to the figure. The first two are more mysterious and dramatic, and the third is more solid and confident.

The fourth example is drawn with an outline [illegible] hatching [illegible] long strokes [illegible] and [illegible] over the face as [illegible] surface made [illegible] type of shading [illegible] more [illegible] the viewer [illegible] more [illegible] variety [illegible] Areas in the [illegible] have [illegible] areas [illegible] Building [illegible] around the eyes [illegible] giving [illegible] expression.

EXERCISE:

VOLUME WITH CROSSHATCHING

Crosshatching is used to create tonal shifts and to indicate the roundness of a surface. The best way to think about crosshatching



EXERCISE:

CREATING A LANDSCAPE WITH TEXTURE AND MARKS

(BUT NO OUTLINES)

MARKS IN A DRAWING CAN BE ASSIGNED TO SPECIFIC SURFACES TO DESCRIBE THEM WITHOUT LITERALLY DEPICTING THEM. A MARK IS AN ABSTRACT INDICATOR OF INFORMATION. IN THIS EXERCISE, THE DIFFERENT ELEMENTS ARE EACH ASSIGNED A SPECIFIC AND UNIQUE MARK. EACH MARK IS USED EXCLUSIVELY FOR THAT SURFACE OR OBJECT TO DESCRIBE THE SURFACE TONALLY.

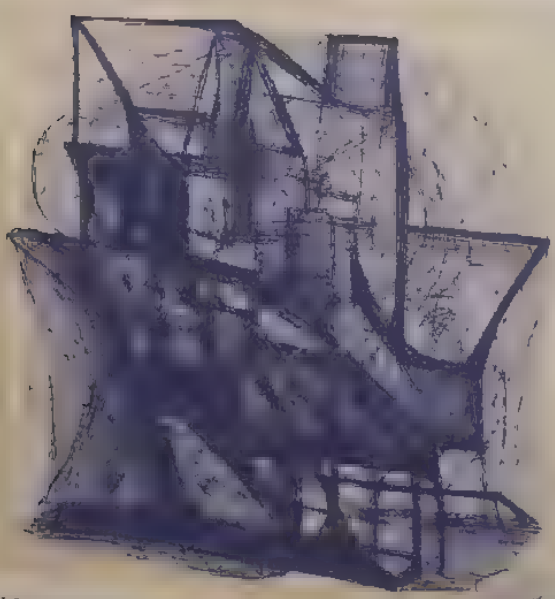
In this example, the grass is defined by a [illegible] usually three [illegible]

CHAPTER 3: CONTEMPORARY ABSTRACTION

he artists featured in this chapter are exploring the limitations and very nature of the pen. Unlike classical artists, each of these artists is finding a new way of drawing that stems from a unique quality found in ballpoint. This leads to a wide range of ideas about how to use the pen. The only common ground of these artists' work is the sense of exploration. In these processes, the medium can become the subject itself or in some way is integral to the overall concept of the work, by creating work based on the limitations and nature of ballpoint. These abstractions are only possible with the pen.

FEATURED ARTIST:

JOANNE GREENBAUM



JOANNE GREENBAUM'S DRAWINGS JUST BEGIN WHEN SHE'S DRAWING. SHE STARTS BY PICKING UP THE PEN AND SEEING WHAT HAPPENS, WITH NO GOAL IN MIND. SHE SOMETIMES SITS AND JUST SCRIBBLES; OTHER TIMES, IT'S SOMETHING MORE DETAILED AND ANALYTICAL. THE FORMS EMERGE AS SHE DRAWS. THE FORMS SHE CREATES COME FROM A PICTORIAL LANGUAGE THAT INTERESTS HER MOSTLY A FICTIONAL ARCHITECTURE THAT ACTS AS A SCAFFOLDING TO MAKE IMPOSSIBLE SPACES. IT IS IMPORTANT TO LOOK AT THE DRAWINGS AS FORMS AND STRUCTURES, NOT SPECIFIC OR IN ANY WAY REFERRING TO THE REAL WORLD. THE DIVERSITY AND GEOMETRY ARE IMAGINARY, PSYCHOLOGICAL.

Joanne is an abstract painter who uses a wide range of mediums, including oil, acrylic, markers, and colored pencils. She sculpts and also works in ballpoint pen.

To her, the pen is very conducive to overdrawing and creating depth, almost as if she could never go too far, never overwork a drawing. Indeed, the deeper the drawing goes, the better it gets. Her drawings are a way to use energy, to make an artwork that she can hold in her hands and kind of fetishize over, working on them again and again.

EXPLORING TECHNIQUE: KNOWING WHEN IT'S FINISHED

Joanne tends to work on drawings in a pile, each drawing in different stages of completion, going back and forth between drawings until they are done. There is no set plan; sometimes the drawings are finished quickly and sometimes they go more slowly. Usually, the drawing is done when it looks complete, and sometimes it is complete simply when Joanne decides to stop working on it and move on to the next piece.

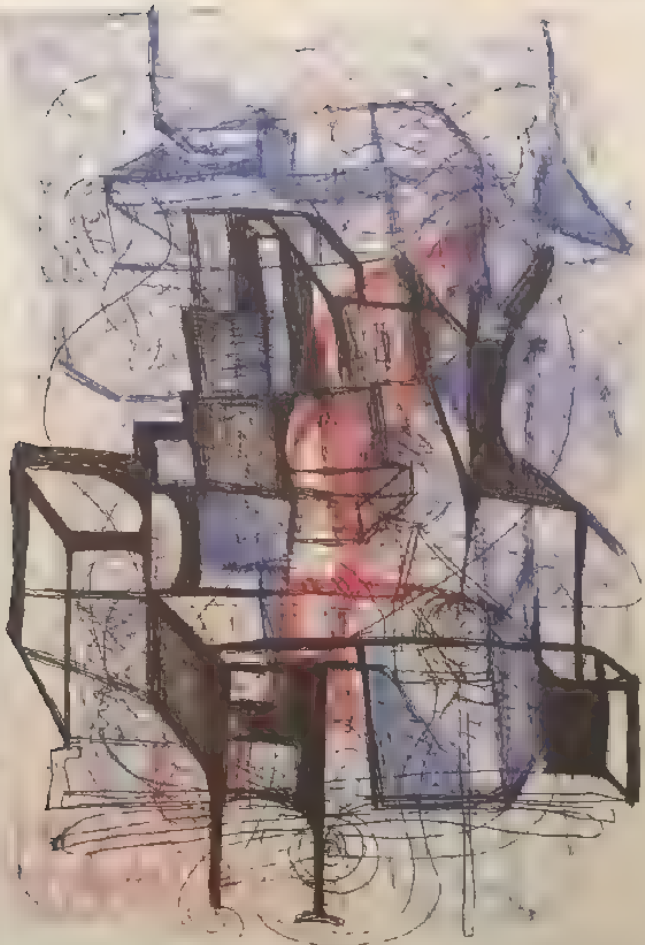
Joanne does not think of these in terms of a precious object that she is making. [illegible] process. A way for [illegible] dealing to mean that she is alive and this is her work, and she's working.

In creating her work, she is looking to create something visually fascinating to herself. It has to feel different from the [illegible] that came before, and it has [illegible] her as an artist. If it does, then she [illegible] 300 [illegible] with [illegible] was [illegible]. This could be considered the point [illegible] her drawings, that the thing is, and that it was made. To use her hands and just make something meaningful feels like a radical idea.

Within this personal dialogue with herself, she acknowledges that what she sees in the work, and what it means to her, is not always what her audiences experience will be.

BALLPOINT REFLECTIONS

Reflecting on her other work, Joanne sees her painting, sculpture, and drawing all come from the same place, which is an interaction with the medium, a reaching to the unique properties of each material. She wants for the material to reveal itself to her, to reveal a form or an object that is specific and inherent to the medium. When she started making sculpture in clay, it felt like a three-dimensional drawing in that she just blindly went in and let the material dictate what happened, similar to drawing in two dimensions. Joanne realized that she liked making tabletop sculptures so she could sit at a table, like drawing, and just let her mind wander and use that to dictate what the final outcome would be.



FEATURED ARTIST:

JOAN SALÓ

JOAN SALÓ'S WORK INVOLVES CREATING A HARMONY OF STRAIGHT LINES USING A FULL SPECTRUM OF COLORED PENS. IN JOAN'S WORK, HIS MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUE REFLECT THE CONCEPT WHICH DRIVES THE PIECE. HIS DRAWINGS CAN BE SEEN AS LARGE EXPRESSIONISTIC WORKS, AND HIS PROCESS IS ENGINEERED TO EXPRESS A CLEAN, PURE, UNINHIBITED FORM OF EMOTION.

The straight line removes his gesture, and personality, from the mark. The repeating and layering of nondescript straight lines, a practice that consciously evokes Tibetan mandala making, creates a meditative process, a sensation that can also be imposed on the viewer.

EXPLORING TECHNIQUE: LIMITATION AND MEDITATION

Joan has chosen a technique focused on limitation, using only straight lines, which reference the shape of the canvas by paralleling its edges. His process evolved out of a set of expressionistic standards, where the mark is the focal point of artistic expression, the center of the artist's vocabulary. An extreme example of this thinking would be Jackson Pollock and the drips he uses. The personality of the mark is explored through the gesture of the line or stroke. Joan's current process evolved from this idea.

His earlier work relied on an exploration of the stroke and its gesture, and he refined this almost to its antithesis, exploring the straight line. The straight line removes his gesture, and personality, from the mark. The repeating and layering of nondescript straight lines, a practice that consciously evokes Tibetan mandala making, creates a meditative process, a sensation that can also be invoked in the viewer. The element of meditation and the emphasis on the process opens Joan to what he calls "the role of his subconscious" in his creative process. He works within a process that is highly structured, but the structure exists to facilitate a form of improvisation, a way of exploring unpredictable elements of his unconscious, therefore allowing him to reach a purer form of expressionism.

BALLPOINT REFLECTIONS

[illegible] attention. He [illegible] space as his [illegible]. He [illegible] ballpoint pen [illegible] a variety of colors on pre-[illegible] canvas. The resistance, combination of canvas and association with [illegible] a medium, that is convenient, to elevate the subject to the point of being [illegible] as a bourgeois and elitist—even, in some cases, fascist medium. In a classical oil painting, subjects were typically upper class, associated with wealth, religion, and loyalty to patron. A subject in oil was to elevate it to the highest medium, the most sophisticated way of [illegible].

In contrast, ballpoint pen is a mundane object. It is the [illegible] of a [illegible] student's choice to use ballpoint pen, contrasted with the choice to use on canvas. It is a mistake, much like his overall system of drawing, by which he strips out any superfluous marks, anything decorative, ornate, or purely decorative. It's a tool he uses to get at the core of his expression, creating starkness while allowing vibrancy and boldness.

Mexican e dis, exhibition view, 2010–11 Ballpoint pen on canvas

ART IN CONTEXT

[illegible] drawing system [illegible] determine [illegible] on. Minimalist [illegible] Ellsworth [illegible] Newman [illegible] 1960s [illegible] by [illegible] the abstract [illegible] ballpoint pens [illegible] the [illegible] or mark, a vertical line [illegible] to the vertical [illegible] the [illegible] which [illegible] by the pen. The colors are [illegible] color hand as well as [illegible] position. The [illegible] processes are applied [illegible] the darker colors are layered [illegible] so, the [illegible] areas have the most [illegible] the lightest areas have the least. Every [illegible] follows those [illegible]

Knowing these rules helps the viewer understand the drawings better, as the first experience viewing them may be in noting the similarity of the works. Once the system becomes evident, however, the similarities of the pieces become less relevant and the differences regarding composition and color arrangements hold sway as each piece becomes apparent. These rules keep each body of work unique and each piece distinct. With the range of choices to be made within each piece, so much what may otherwise be subtle shifts of color and composition become significant and the behavior assumptions, and the subtleties of the pieces become delicate and unique and much more in depth.

FEATURED ARTIST:

SHANE McADAMS

SHANE'S PAINTINGS CAPTURE A BALANCE BETWEEN REALISTIC DEPICTIONS OF LANDSCAPES COMBINED WITH PROCESS-BASED ABSTRACTIONS, THOUGH THE ABSTRACTIONS THEMSELVES SEEM TO IMPLY A SPACE SIMILAR TO A LANDSCAPE

Not simply recreating nature or capturing it [illegible] on scale, Shane feels his process, his experimentation with the materials, is designed to reveal a chemical nature within the medium. His different processes are related to the way nature and time sculpt the actual landscape. Like wind and water carving out mountains, water and oxygen oxidize iron, insects chisel wood, and so on—nature creating its own "sculpture" or "painting." Shane's explorations are meant to exploit the nature of his materials in a similar way.

The balance between Shane's paintings of landscapes, and abstractions or geometry begins by his painting back onto the actual work as a conceptual painterly part. There was a [illegible] poetry about a really quick event, like the drawing of pen ink and bleach on a surface, and bringing it with a painting that took twenty-eight hours. I also reinforced the metaphor about nature and time—how the increments of nature benefits the petty attempts by the human [illegible] in the drawing (*Hot Air*, page 44), for example, he blotted out used in a traditional sense to [illegible] the mountains, and the drawing was layered on top of a background wash of [illegible] pen ink and bleach.

EXPLORING TECHNIQUE: MATERIALS AND EXPERIMENTATION

Shane's interest is in combinations of [illegible] media that can be broken down [illegible] unconventional ways. He used epoxy resin, Sharpies, white-out, [illegible] Elmer's glue, expanded polystyrene, and a assortment of other [illegible]

Shane's experiments with materials [illegible] to find the elements where the [illegible] reveal a natural structure. [illegible] looks for the secondary qualities [illegible] spectrum—[illegible] but hidden in there is a property. He will never draw with a Sharpie or use Elmer's glue as adhesive. Without [illegible] the discoveries are applied [illegible] have very specific, [illegible] and because what [illegible] the nature [illegible] which [illegible] a factory [illegible] something [illegible] purchased off the shelves in [illegible] supply chain.

"It is messy and somewhat [illegible] Shane says. [illegible] rigid." Shane [illegible] The awkwardness [illegible] combined [illegible] left brained. I like [illegible] but the aspect [illegible] exercise [illegible] consciousness.

[illegible] t [illegible] m [illegible]ker
[illegible] same t me th a
[illegible] art fo a ity of a [illegible] t no of th
[illegible] m [illegible] cox ng n then
[illegible] n d mpet and more e eqa [illegible] that
th r xovent cna [illegible]

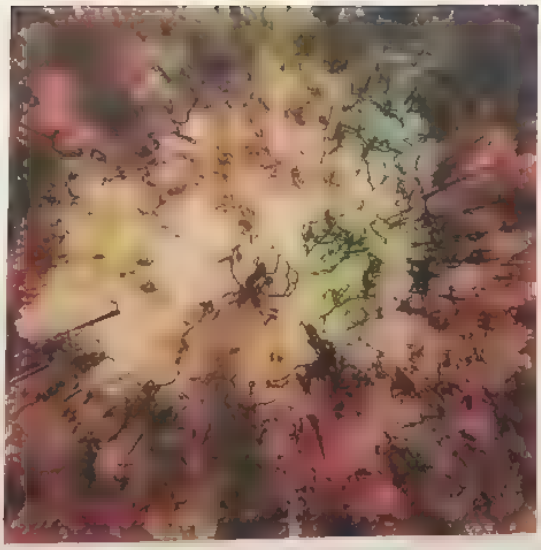
"Sketching is ecstat[illegible]
and messy and frustrat[illegible]
foundation to [illegible]

BALLPOINT REFLECTIONS

Shane played with ballpoint [illegible] over about a two-year period and developed several processes for using the ink in unique ways. He wanted first to appraise its properties. He began by collecting a few ounces of ballpoint ink. At first, he tried atomizing it, which produces fibrous strands rather than a mist. He tried pouring hot resin over it, producing streaky emulsion patterns. Ballpoint ink is a viscous polymer that, when blown on, can't vaporize, so it ends up forming a web-like pattern of fine lines.

"I don't like to completely rip my hand and tell how things are made," Shane says, "as I think the strange opacity is part of the beauty of the practice. With my abstract work, I try to create structures whose complexity belies the simplicity of how they were made, so if anyone wants to figure it out, I look to clarity and simplicity. It's about exploding the idea of a convention like 'painting' or 'nature' so that we may see it from every angle."

Shane refers to his sketching process as material experiments. He thinks in terms of actions and the material. His compositions are a by-product of the action's effect on the material. When he makes notes about ideas for new pieces, he only writes in nouns and verbs: "Two pieces of Tyvek. Two ink ice cubes. Spin." He considers the composition in the preparation, but has little control over the [illegible]



Above:
Spin (Row 34, 25 [illegible]), Ballpoint pen and resin on [illegible] 30 x 30 [illegible]

EXERCISE

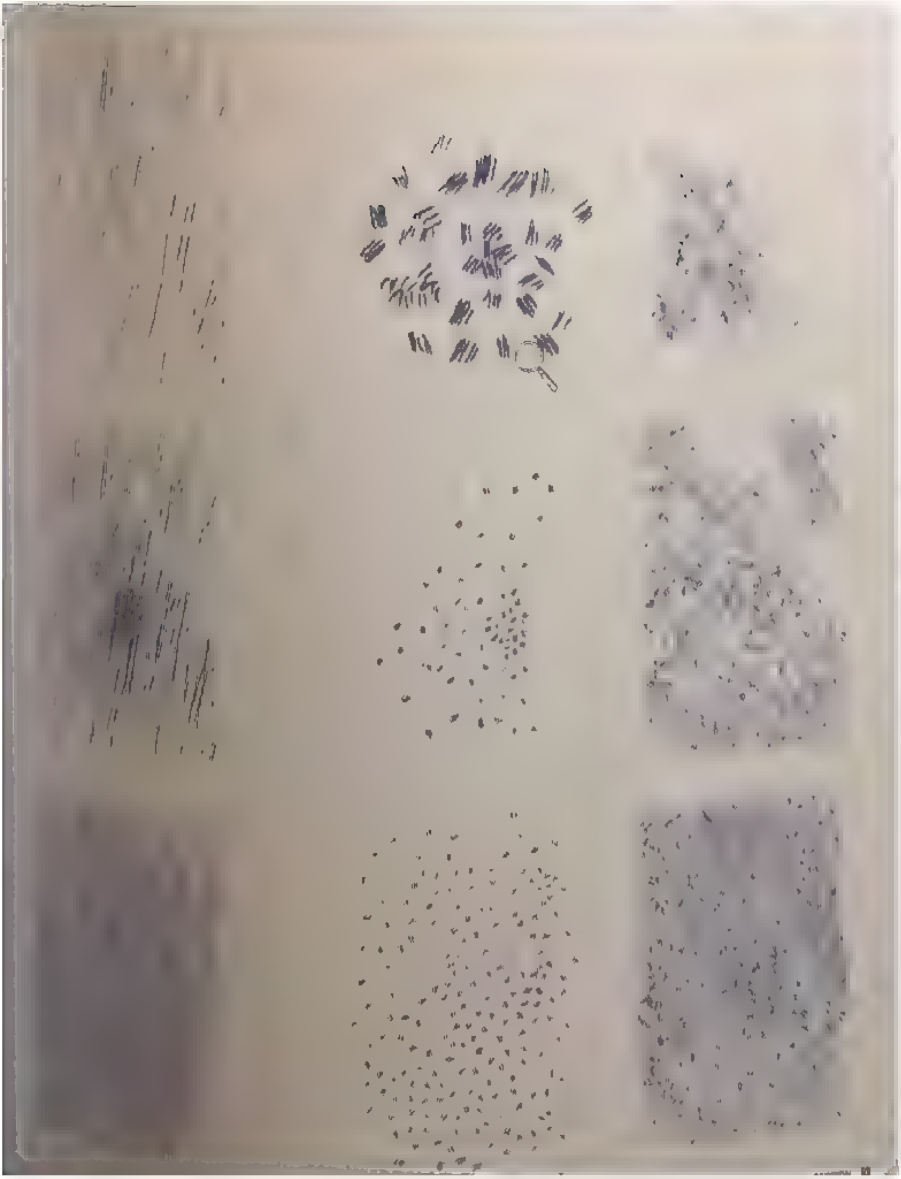
CREATING AN EVEN FIELD OF MARKS

TO CREATE A FIELD OF MARKS, NOT A REPEATING PATTERN, IS MUCH AS A COLOUR FIELD. DECIDE ON A TYPE OF MARK. IN THIS INSTANCE, THE MARKS ARE SMALL, ASHEN AND LONG STROKES.

With a field of these marks, start by creating a small cluster, but do not close it off. Let the eye flow around the edge of the cluster of marks in in between the [illegible] appear. This is a [illegible] process. The rest of the [illegible] expand further out from here. Do not work in rigid rows, or big ovals, or move around the page so that the marks are being applied evenly. Loosely expand the field so the edge of the areas that [illegible] the field. At this point the [illegible] few should be defined, but the money will [illegible] like the [illegible] of marks with open spaces in between them. The [illegible] should be still [illegible] evenly spaced. The rest of the process is a game [illegible] and the goal of the game is [illegible] the empty spaces, but again [illegible] one area [illegible] or [illegible] be uneven. Move back and forth around the page [illegible] physically.

If the [illegible] reveal where the [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] with [illegible] open area [illegible] fields [illegible] and will [illegible] [illegible] As the [illegible] grows smaller [illegible] between [illegible] grow smaller [illegible] marks are being applied.

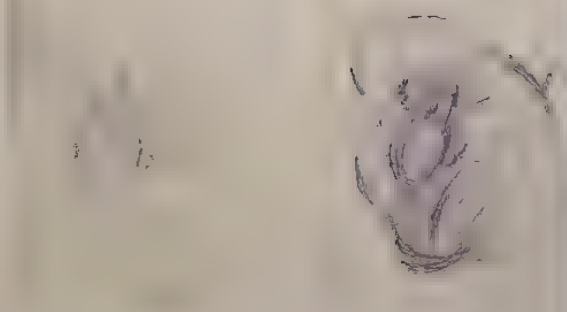
Always [illegible] for the ghost area to add marks, continuously [illegible] field as dark as desired.



EXERCISE.

SCRIBBLE

THE IDEA OF THIS ASSIGNMENT IS NOT TO THINK BUT TO DRAW. USE THE MOTION OF THE WRIST TO CREATE THE MARKS IN A FREE FLOWING MANNER. THIS FIRST STEP IS MEANT TO FACILITATE THE MIND FRAME TO NOT BE AFRAID OF MAKING A BAD DRAWING. IT FREES THE ARTIST OF THE IDEA THAT A DRAWING IS A "PRECIOUS" THING AND ALLOWING THE MARKS TO LEAD THE DRAWING AND THE MOTION OF THE WRIST OR ARM TO CONTROL THE MARK ACCOMPLISH THIS.



Once the initial scribble is down, a type of mark or the evident texture or a feeling from the marks will become obvious and will become the basis for the rest of the drawing.

Begin to build the drawing up by using the initial marks and begin to define a form. This does not need to be a literal form. It is just a form, but more a point of interest.

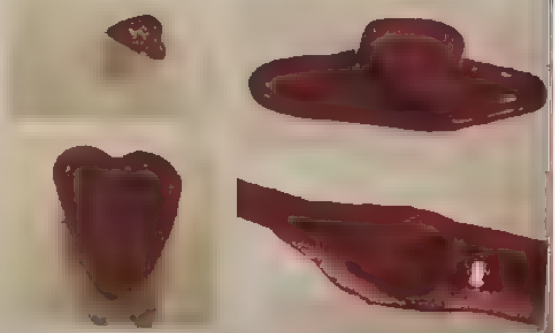
This drawing should be [illegible] further has its [illegible] a drawing does in [illegible] work. To be [illegible] what [illegible] "pretty" [illegible] will possibly [illegible] the drawing but it will also help prevent [illegible] I will also strengthen the concept of what "done" means in a drawing and allow [illegible] more confidence in subsequent drawings.

This [illegible] that [illegible] repeat [illegible] drawing [illegible] drawing [illegible] drawing [illegible] [illegible]

EXERCISE:

RESPONDING TO AN ORGANIC PROCESS

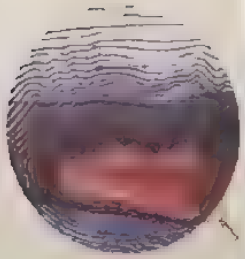
THE OBJECT OF THIS EXERCISE IS TO CREATE A NATURAL PROCESS TO USE A MEDIUM IN A WAY THAT IS NOT TYPICAL DRAWING BUT A DRAWING THAT DICTATED BY THE NATURE OF THE MEDIUM. IN THIS CASE FROZEN WATERCOLOR. THE PROCESS IS ORGANIC AND WILL CREATE A NATURAL ANGLE IN LANGUET COMPOSITION THAT REFLECTS THE NATURE OF THE MATERIAL. THIS IS MEANT TO TAKE THE CONTROL OF THE COMPOSITION OUT OF THE ARTIST'S HANDS. PLAN GARDE INSETTO THE PROCESS LOSS OF CONTROL SAND ELEMENTS TO THE EXERCISE.



In this particular process, the goal is to create a thin cut of watercolor in which the outcome of frozen watercolor thawing is the desired pattern.

Make water color paints and freeze in ice tray and freeze. Place in the freezer. [illegible] watercolor [illegible] flowed [illegible] three layers [illegible] across the page. The [illegible] the paint [illegible] a water color [illegible] the blend [illegible] the page. This creates a natural mark, [illegible] wash or brush stroke.

[illegible] and the process. Allowing allow the water to create slow [illegible] as [illegible] stage of the wash. These [illegible] were created [illegible] but no [illegible] intentions and allowed to post-




Drive

CHAPTER 4:
ILLUSTRATION AND DESIGN

These artists use ballpoint pen as part of a commercial project, an ad campaign, a comic book, or a magazine article. The styles and techniques vary widely from artist to artist, but the commonality is how ballpoint pen is used as a graphic tool: its fixed line weight and consistent line quality make for an easily reproducible (mass-produced) format. We also explore the creative process of the designer because the focus of the drawing can be much more abstract, dealing with patterns and design elements rather than drafting and rendering [illegible] chapter.

FEATURED ARTIST:

JIM RUGG

JIM REFERENCES A WIDE RANGE OF SUBJECTS, WHICH ON THE SURFACE SEEM FAIRLY UNRELATED, YET CHANNELING THEM ALL THROUGH BALLPOINT PEN INTO A NOTEBOOK HAS A UNIFYING EFFECT, GIVING THE SENSE OF A SINGLE PERSPECTIVE. CONNOTATIONS OF CHILDHOOD FROM THE CONTEXT OF THE NOTEBOOK TIE IN NICELY WITH THE THEME OF THE IMAGES: VIDEO GAMES, SUPERHERO MOVIES, AND ANIMALS. THESE DRAWINGS ARE MASTERFULLY EXECUTED, BUT WITH THE TASTE OF A KID GROWING UP IN THE LATE 1980S.

A THEME OF SHARED CULTURE

When Jim started making these drawings he felt a strong sense of déjà vu. It's [illegible] boyhood days, when he was about seven or eight years old, [illegible] sketchbook per every single day. He used to draw [illegible] with rapture. He [illegible] parents [illegible] childhood every day [illegible] twelve years. Once he was [illegible] college [illegible] paperless and he took [illegible] changed after the advent of Photoshop.

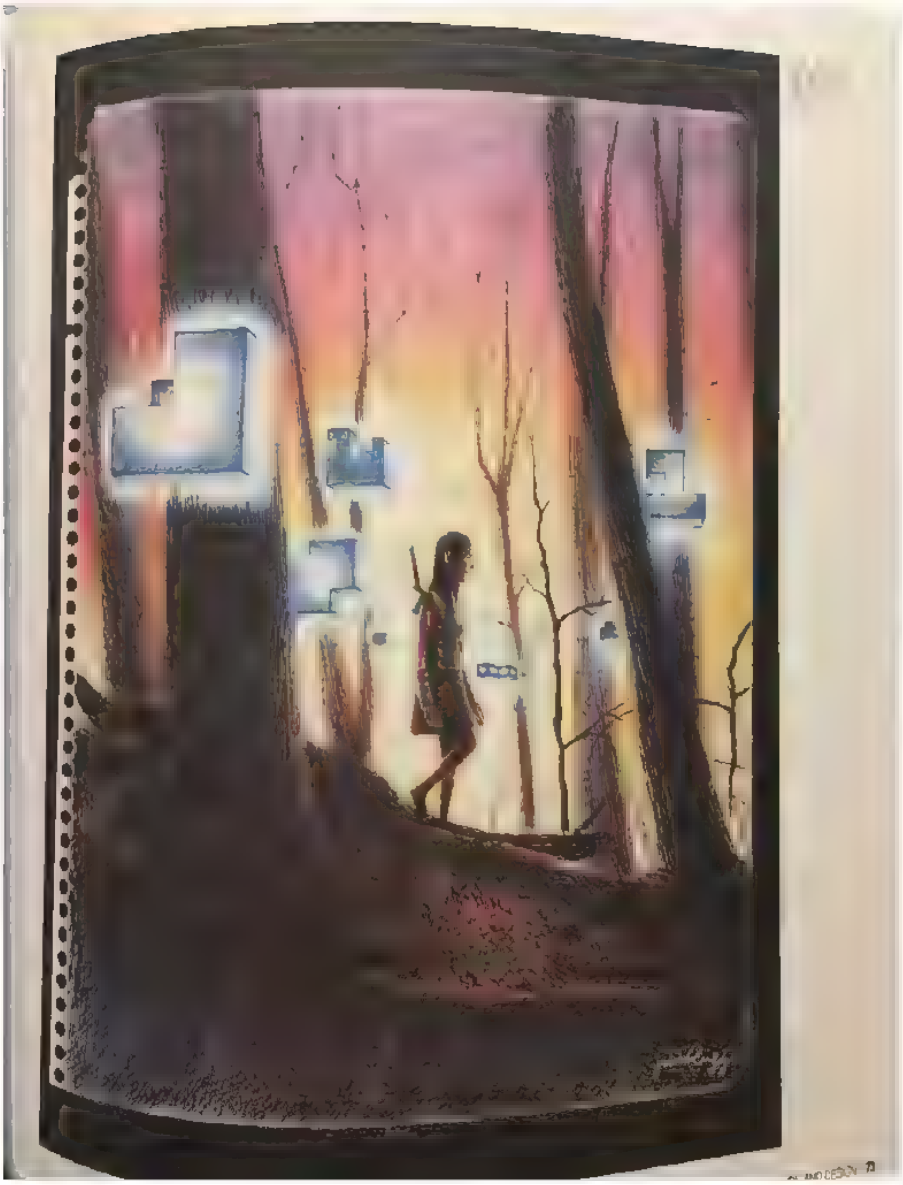
After these [illegible] twenty years, not drawing with a pen or pencil, he tried again and [illegible] traveling. According [illegible] was made of what he drew as a teenager sitting [illegible] video games [illegible] girls—anything [illegible] history. Thus, the subject matter [illegible] drawings [illegible] to [illegible] 90s [illegible] shared culture [illegible] private. When [illegible] drawings [illegible] subject matter [illegible] Hardly [illegible]

"[illegible] remember [illegible] angle [illegible] that time [illegible] After [illegible] Organized [illegible] suburban [illegible] Mexico [illegible] The [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

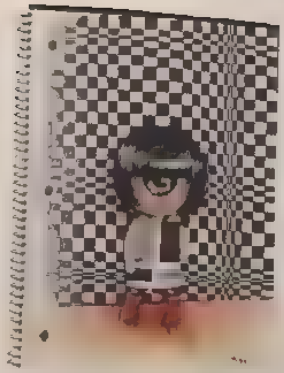


NOTEBOOKS VS. SKETCHBOOKS

[illegible] are [illegible] part [illegible] works. He [illegible] finished works [illegible] sketchbooks. They are an [illegible] interest [illegible] the making [illegible] describe his drawings as [illegible] insane. Most [illegible] a real [illegible] metal detail. Making these [illegible] different process than working [illegible] Designer Photoshop or Illustrator [illegible] processes and uses [illegible] closer [illegible] paper work's unique [illegible] has an outlook [illegible] and the work. It's about the [illegible] between [illegible] and rendering. It [illegible] constantly staring at the drawing for [illegible] where [illegible]

[illegible] the composition [illegible] design can part of the present [illegible] Patterns of his drawings, people [illegible] notebooks [illegible] present [illegible] work. [illegible] notebook is part of the [illegible] People respond to the materials [illegible] nostalgia satisfaction but [illegible] when Jim did can [illegible] the subjects but a so [illegible] drawing doodling [illegible] hook [illegible] the pen and the way [illegible] with the paper. It's an [illegible] drawing experience [illegible] pen's starting at [illegible] paper. Everyone knows what [illegible] they're seeing [illegible] they're seeing.

[illegible] notebooks is delicate [illegible] and a lot of drawing [illegible] the paper's quality. Jim has



taken advantage of this same [illegible] drawings having once made a Ghostbusters drawing that included a Ghostbuster sewer patch. For that patch, [illegible] an number of sheets of paper together, then [illegible] out by tracing a round [illegible] paper with a pen. The result was a texture [illegible] an actual embroidered patch.

From [illegible] given a rather notebook which seems [illegible] have a higher quality paper and [illegible] save now patching [illegible] likes. There is no part [illegible] that is preferable than [illegible] made now, despite any different brands on the [illegible] usually is as the cover has [illegible] different but the paper is always the same.

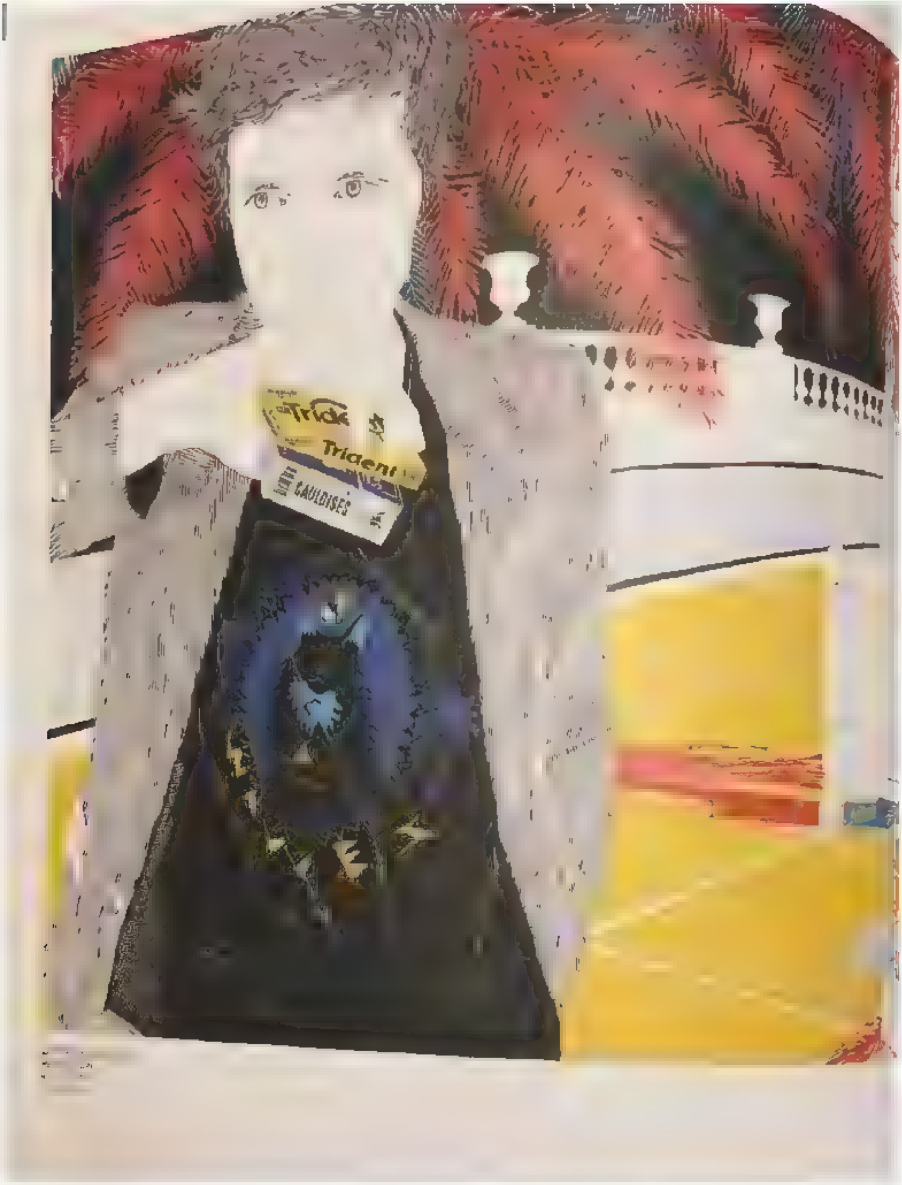
Jim doesn't consider the notebook drawings to be the same as sketchbooks. His sketchbooks are [illegible] looser [illegible] supply and [illegible] of mistakes and ironically contain a lot of notes. He has [illegible] books [illegible] and drawing [illegible] some are notebooks. These [illegible] Jim [illegible] sketchbooks [illegible] have [illegible] pages [illegible] is barely [illegible] and more. They are [illegible] journals and sources [illegible] paper [illegible] occasionally contain drawings.

FEATURED ARTIST:

CARINE BRANCOWITZ

CARINE BRANCOWITZ CREATES DRAWINGS OF FASHIONABLE YOUNG PEOPLE IN IMAGINARY DREAMSCAPES. HER CLEAN, STARK STYLE OF DRAWING BRINGS TO LIFE A SHARP IDEAL WORLD. FIGURES AND THEIR ENVIRONMENTS ARE INTERPRETED THROUGH CLEAR DELINEATIONS OF LINE AND PATTERN. HAIRSTYLES, CLOTHING, AND ARCHITECTURAL AND FLORAL ABSTRACTIONS PRESENTED IN BOLD SIMPLICITY. HER IMAGERY COMBINES A SNAPSHOT SENSE OF INTIMACY IN HER SUBJECTS, WITH A FASHION ILLUSTRATOR'S SENSIBILITY TOWARD THE DETAILS AND PARTICULARS OF CLOTHING AND HAIRSTYLES. THE FIGURES, ARCHITECTURE, AND PLANTS HAVE THE SIMPLICITY, CLARITY, AND IDEALISM OF AN ATHENIAN VASE OR OF GREEK AND ROMAN SCULPTURE.

Kaelia became interested in drawing at [illegible] age. Her mother was an artist [illegible] write always sketchbooks and [illegible] She attended the École [illegible] in Paris and started [illegible] fashion. Her work with ballpoint started [illegible] 2007. Her subjects reflect life around [illegible] boys and girls mostly, and they inhabit [illegible] realities: she sees the places in her [illegible] and recreates them. She carries [illegible] and takes pictures to work from [illegible] Carine likes drawing people and [illegible] architecture and likes making [illegible] ancient structures and Greek and [illegible] sculptures.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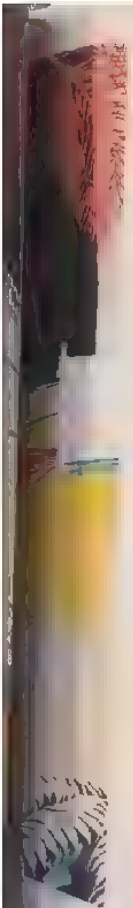


She embraces the pen's limitations; not being able to correct the drawing creates a tension of being always close to failure

EXPLORING TECHNIQUE: PROCESS AND PLANNING

The images, ideas, and process in Carine's artwork come naturally to her. It's an organic process where she doesn't question herself. A drawing starts from an image in her head, a precise moment that she tries to get out on paper. The process of drawing is an unconscious act, with her hand doing one thing and her mind doing a thousand other things, and it creates for her a kind of trance.

Preparing for a drawing can take weeks. Elaborate over the planning, creating a delicate balance of elements, breaking down where to focus on details, and which color or colors to use. Moving something breaks the balance, and the composition needs to be reworked.

She uses Photoshop to compose her work, collaging together photos, sketches, colors, and patterns to see what looks good. It can sometimes take up to a month to finish a piece.

Carine works mostly in ballpoint because of the restrained situation the pen creates. She embraces the pen's limitations, not being able to correct the drawing creates a tension of being always close to failure. Carine also uses other media, such as felt-tip pens, pencils, acrylic, and China ink, depending on the drawing and her inspirations for the drawing. She creates original work for exhibition and also works as an illustrator with commissions and editorials for clients including Nokia, DC Comics, Converse, Aylon, *Marie Claire* and *Playboy*.

FEATURED ARTIST:

CHAMO SAN

CHAMO SAN IS AN ILLUSTRATOR FROM BARCELONA, HIS WORK COMBINES KNOWLEDGE OF CLASSICAL FIGURE DRAWING WITH A LOVE OF MODERN ABSTRACTION AND GRAPHIC DESIGN. HE USES BALLPOINT PEN IN A VARIETY OF TECHNIQUES, INCLUDING SOFT CROSSHATCHING, PHOTO REALISTIC TONAL DRAWING AND FLAT GRAPHIC SHAPES. IN HIGH SCHOOL HE WOULD DRAW ALL OVER HIS BOOKS AND ANYTHING HE HAD WITH A BALLPOINT PEN, FILLING EVERYTHING WITH DRAWINGS. HE DEVELOPED AN INTEREST IN FIGURE DRAWING AND CHOSE TO STUDY FINE ARTS, ENTERING BARCELONA UNIVERSITY HOPING FOR AN EDUCATION IN TECHNIQUE AND THE CHANCE TO EXPLORE NEW MATERIALS. HE WAS DISAPPOINTED WITH THE EXPERIENCE. HE LATER STUDIED FOR A YEAR IN PARIS, WHERE HE RECEIVED BETTER INSTRUCTION IN FIGURE DRAWING. AFTER FINISHING HE BEGAN TO COMBINE HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE FIGURE WITH BALLPOINT TECHNIQUES HE REMEMBERED FROM HIGH SCHOOL, WHICH LED TO A STYLE STEEPED IN DETAIL AND REFINEMENT.

[illegible]

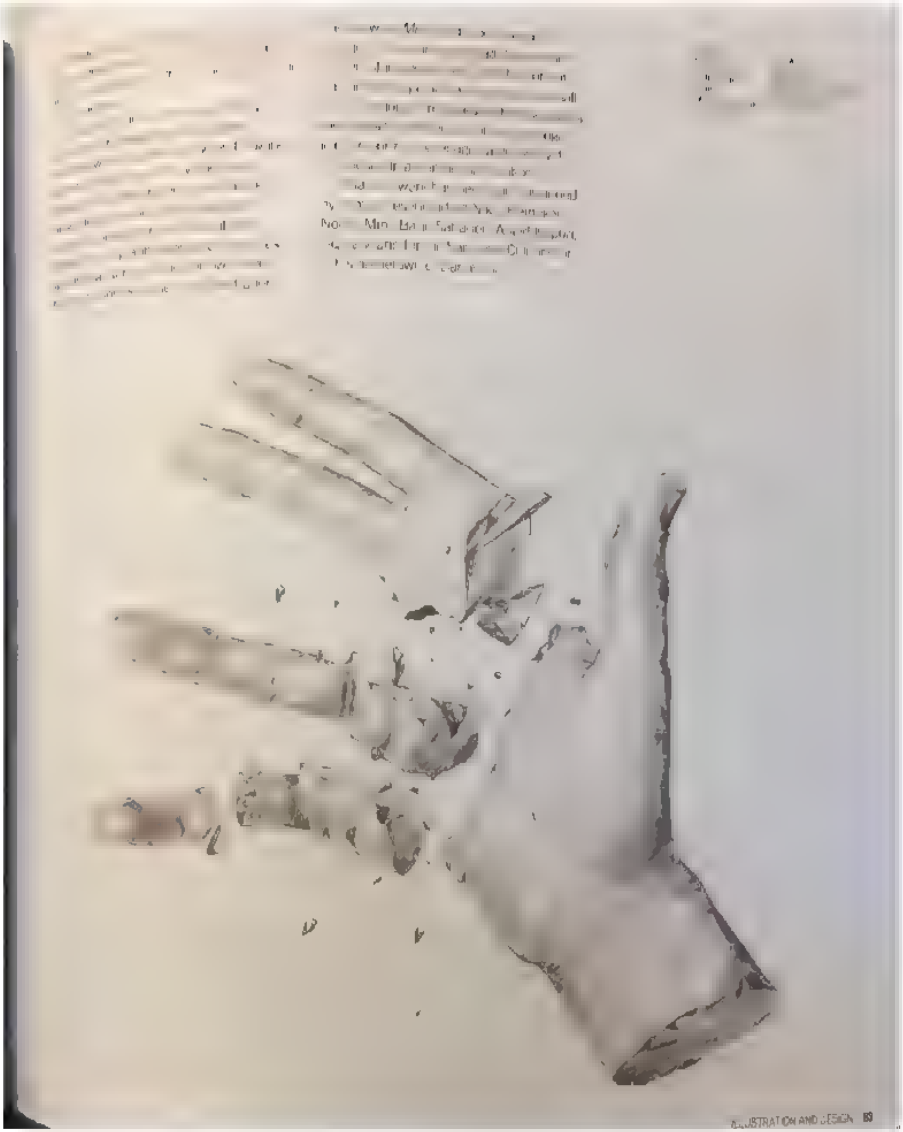
EXPLORING TECHNIQUE: REALITY AND ABSTRACTION

[illegible] realistically [illegible] simply copying [illegible] intersection of reality and abstraction [illegible] drawing [illegible]

[illegible] what might be found [illegible] etchings [illegible] photographic, where form is [illegible] with cross-hatching [illegible] the building [illegible] variety of marks.

[illegible] Mess have [illegible] approaches to drawing: the classical [illegible] style and the more modern [illegible] style appear in the same image. The [illegible] Chen [illegible] worked on every day while [illegible] fine [illegible] than what he uses now. He began using these figure drawing experiments as a way to experiment with different ways [illegible] exploring new languages.

This thinking can be seen in the drawing [illegible] uses classical hatching [illegible] the body [illegible] shapes reminiscent [illegible] the negative space [illegible] the absence of line leaves the viewer [illegible]



FEATURED ARTIST:

JOO CHUNG

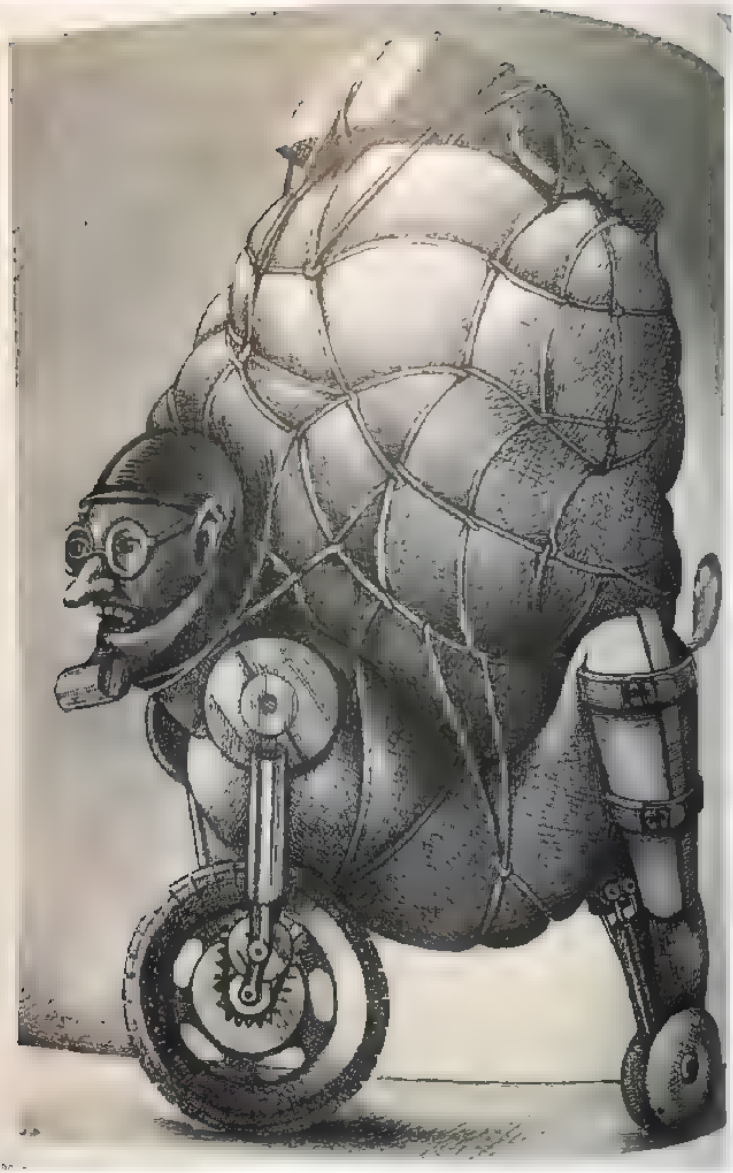
JOO CHUNG WORKED AS AN ILLUSTRATOR FOR SEVERAL DECADES AND HAS TAUGHT DRAWING AT THE SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS IN NEW YORK FOR OVER TWENTY YEARS. FOR HIS PROFESSIONAL WORK, JOO TYPICALLY RELIED ON PAINTING, BUT FOR HIS PERSONAL AND SKETCHBOOK WORK HE USES PRIMARILY BALLPOINT PEN. THE PEN'S ATTRACTIVENESS TO JOO'S THE FIRST IS ITS CONVENIENCE AND AVAILABILITY. THE OTHER IS THAT IT DOES NOT NEED SHARPENING OR REFILLING. AFTER YEARS OF USING A PEN THAT NEEDED TO BE DIPPED EVERY SO MANY MINUTES, JOO FOUND THE PAUSE NEEDED TO DIP HIS PEN TO BE DISTRACTING, AND HE BEGAN TO FAVOR THE CONSISTENCY OF BALLPOINT. NOT HAVING TO PAUSE DURING HIS DRAWING LEFT HIM MORE IN TUNE WITH HIS PROCESS, ALLOWING HIM TO BECOME LOST IN HIS WORK.

Ino's drawing is realistic in the way it [illegible] space and volume, though he does not consider himself a realist but something more like an illusionist. He uses a classical academic method to bring images from the imagination; these techniques only serve to illuminate his imagination. The subject is the central focus, so in a way, the process that creates the image needs to be somewhat invisible or not distracting from the subject.

EXPLORING TECHNIQUE: CLASSICAL ILLUSIONISM

Ino's technique is derived, if not inspired by, the work mostly of pre-Caravaggio European draftsmen. Caravaggio represented a change in thinking about light, shadow, and line in image making; his work marked a shift in observation that is more similar to the way a camera observes light and so was a shift toward the modern. Drawing before this time, as in the thinking that stemmed from an artist like Botticelli or Bellini, was a style derived from natural observation but that relied more on line rather than light to interpret both life and imagination.

Ino's interest in classical western European artists is not one of imitation, but more a reinvention of these techniques to serve his own ideas; the purpose is not to look like Brueghel or Da Vinci, just to understand how they created an illusion. He looks to their example for answers to simple questions, such as how is a round object drawn to look voluminous, and how is reality translated? This is how he learned to create his own imaginary world. Artists that he looks to for insight on illusionistic, or imaginary, drawing include Da Vinci, Botticelli, Brueghel, Durer, and Hans Bellmer.



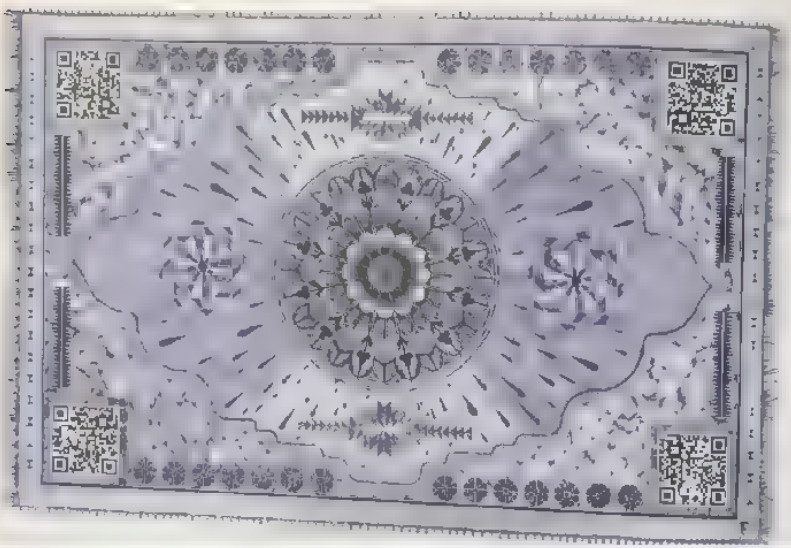
These examples of Joo's compositions constitute a body of work distinctly separate from what he did in his commercial work. These are a sort of emotional release and come from a time of transition. These drawings were done with no purpose in mind aside from the desire to reconnect with a younger self, to rediscover the act of drawing that he enjoyed in high school before he became a more serious artist. It is drawing for the pure enjoyment of it. The ideas are spontaneous, or at least somewhat improvised.

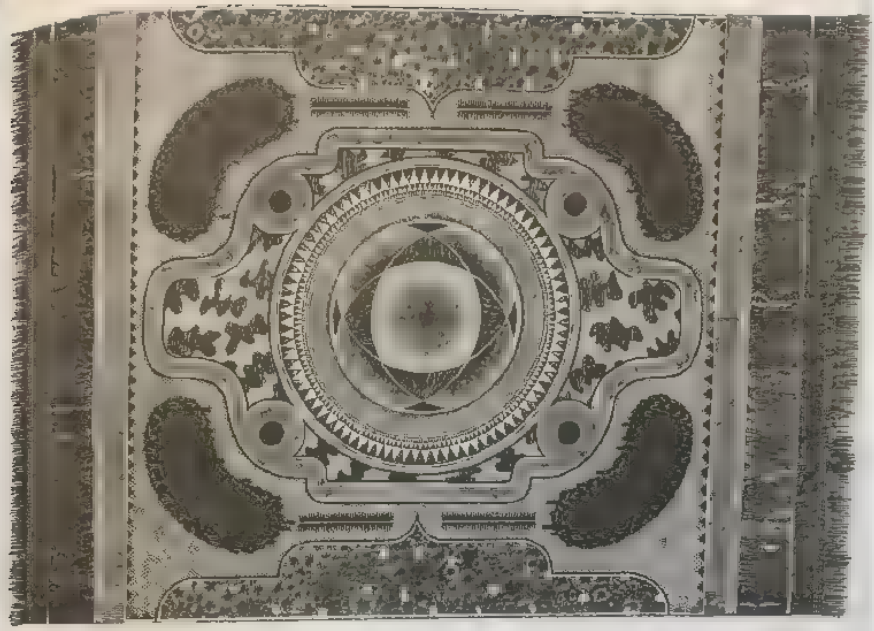
To begin a process like this, to start a drawing with nothing in mind, Joo had to come up with a method to overcome the awkwardness of the blank page. He starts by just making random marks, building what he calls a false sense of history. He builds up the marks and then gessoes over the marks, adding a tone to the page. Having a history, a rough surface, and a personality on the page allows Joo "permission" to move on and takes the fear out of the blank page.

FEATURED ARTIST:

JONATHAN BRÉCHIGNAC

JONATHAN BRÉCHIGNAC'S WORK COMBINES ABSTRACTIONS AND DESIGN ELEMENTS FROM DISPARATE SOURCES: QUICK RESPONSE (QR) CODES, PLAYING CARD SUITES, ARABESQUES, AND SOUTHWESTERN AMERICAN INDIAN ART. TRANSLATING ALL OF THESE SYMBOLS AND INFORMATION THROUGH BALLPOINT HAS A UNIFYING EFFECT, ALLOWING OTHERWISE DISCONNECTED SYMBOLS AND DESIGN ELEMENTS TO FEEL NATURAL, AS THOUGH THEY BELONG TOGETHER.





[illegible] the [illegible] act of [illegible] interaction with the audience, as something [illegible] demands time to look at and [illegible] contemplation and [illegible].

EXPLORING TECHNIQUE: MATERIALS AND INSPIRATION

Jon uses BIC pens because of their availability. He [illegible] to the idea of using something anyone can be familiar with. Everybody has doodled with a pen during a phone call, but Jon repeats his doodles for hours and on bigger sheets, pushing the limits of scale. He uses the most simplistic things to maximize results. A pen, a big sheet of paper, and time are the "tools" needed to make the drawings.

Opposite: [illegible] 45 x 29 inches

Above: [illegible] 134 x 60 in.

DESIGN MOTIFS

EXERCISE

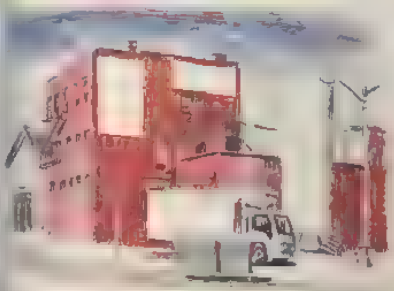
BLENDING COLOR

BLENDING COLORS WITH BALLPOINT IS A PROCESS [illegible] WAY OF CROSSHATCHING THE COLORS OF THE PEN [illegible] COME DIRECTLY FROM THE PEN TEND TO BE BOLD. [illegible] S REPRESENTED MAINLY WITH PRIMARY AND SECONDA[illegible] RED, YELLOW, BLUE, GREEN, ORANGE, PURPLE, PINK, AND [illegible] THE BLUES, REDS, AND GREENS TEND TO HAVE LIGHTER A[illegible] VERSIONS THAT CAN BE USEFUL FOR SHADING, BUT THIS [illegible] RANGE COMPARED WITH THE COLOR RANGE OF, SAY, A 50[illegible] PENCIL COLLECTION OR A 200-COLOR PASTEL SET.

The way to achieve more complex colors is to layer them through crosshatching. The ballpoint pen is fairly viscous, meaning it is very transparent, so layering new pen strokes on top of them will quickly darken the drawing. There is no real "tint" or lightness in the form of a pen that is new except maybe in gel pens, so even though the colors are opaque, they darken as they layer. Crosshatching with light strokes creates a light tint, and single, transparent marks left behind [illegible] colors underneath. For the [illegible] say, blue over yellow, [illegible] the sense of green [illegible] and blending it [illegible] as with a very watery [illegible] but the sense of green is also created because in between the overlapping strokes is still visible pure versions of the yellow and [illegible] blue. The colors are distinctly separate when viewed at a distance, the original intent of each color gives the impression of blending, like CMYK dots on a zoomed in comic page. They separate into distinct colors, but at a distance, they blend together into a more complex and subtle palette. So when layering colors in a drawing, it is important not to make heavy [illegible] strokes.

When starting a color drawing, it may help to begin with a pencil sketch, the reason for a pencil sketch is [illegible] a pre-[illegible] drawing [illegible] every color [illegible] each object [illegible] specific color [illegible] can be difficult to switch between colors while trying to focus on [illegible] composition.

Once the initial color [illegible] the first layer [illegible] These colors should tend toward the cool end, warmer side of the [illegible] case [illegible] red because this is the warmest [illegible] the image. The [illegible] but a deeper, cooler red, [illegible]



[illegible] lines. The wall is in two main shades: a [illegible] bright red on the left face of the building and a darker, cooler color on the right. The color on the left more closely resembles the red from the pen, so the first layer of color can be applied more boldly here. On the right, the same red will have to be layered with purple to knock it down and resemble the color from the image, so the red should be applied more lightly. There is less red on this side than on the opposite wall, so more of the white paper will be exposed to display the purple that will be added in the second layer. The sky graduates from a dark blue to a light. It's not just a tonal shift, but also a color shift, from a purple blue to a slightly lighter more green blue. The colors don't need to be that specific, as the shift from a purple to a blue can be enough. The lighter of the two should be applied first.

The second layer of color will be darker and cooler. (It's easier to cool down warm colors than to warm up cool colors.) The pressure of the marks should be enough on this layer to make the form as dark as it needs to be. If the second pass of color does not make the surface dark enough, it's fine to work back and forth between the first color and the second one, building up the drawing until the balance of color and value is correct. (The red in the right wall had to be worked back and forth between purple and red a number of times to get the rich tone, and the same with the two blues used in the sky, whereas the left red wall was finished with only two passes, as were the Dumpsters in the foreground.)

The last step is to add the darkest, coolest colors. This layer is built up slowly so as not to overwork the shadows and turn them into black abstract shapes. Seeing the detail under wraith (as in the windows on the left wall) creates a better sense of space, and it places the shadow on a three-dimensional surface.

EXERCISE:

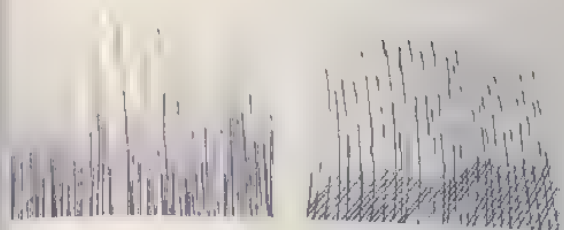
GRADIENTS WITH MARKS

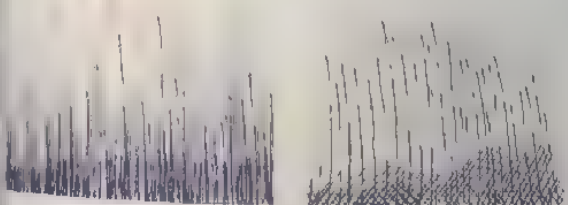
THE UNTRAINED NATURAL IN THE BALLPOINT PEN IS PERTAIN PERFECTLY INTERMEDIATE MOVEMENT MAKING ASSUMED SHE IS A ANY AMOUNT OF THE ART TO MAKE THE SAME POINT PEN ASSUMING TO PRIMARY UNDERSTANDING ALL THIS MIGHT SEEM VANITY THINGS BEFORE EXERCISE TRY HOWEVER THINGS WERE MARKS DIVIDED FIELDS OF MARKS THAT CAN CREATE A GRADIENT. ACHIEVING THIS SEEMS IS MUCH AN ACTUAL CREATION.

A [illegible] marks required [illegible] pressure on [illegible] ink [illegible] together [illegible] ing, [illegible] on [illegible] respective [illegible] gradation a few [illegible] gradation [illegible]. A [illegible] achieved by [illegible] ing the pattern [illegible] marks.

This exercise [illegible] ways [illegible] achieving this [illegible] with different marks. The process is similar to creating a field of marks. Start with drawing the exterior [illegible] field. In this case, the gradation and [illegible] spread out the marks for the gradation, leaving plenty of room to add more. The same [illegible] between [illegible] marks.

In the first example, start with a series of parallel lines [illegible] leave wide spaces in between them. This can actually be done numerically. Start with six [illegible] lines. Between the first two lines [illegible] six lines. Between the next two lines [illegible] much or three lines. Between the next two [illegible] one. This mode acts as a close-up. It [illegible] about diminishing lines at an even pace. On a larger scale it [illegible] can be used to create a smoother, more [illegible] gradation.





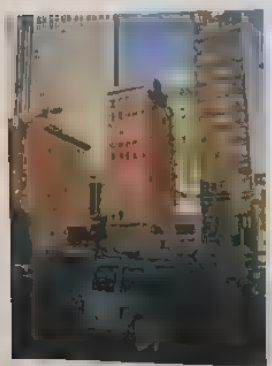
Another example of this can be done with a series of vertical lines. This time make the lines more tightly arranged but leave room for more lines in between height and a new line in between every existing line, but only make the line half as long as the first set. So the new lines are half as long, longer than the rest and shorter than between the first, but half as long. Continue adding lines in between each of the previous lines, only half as long as the previous set.

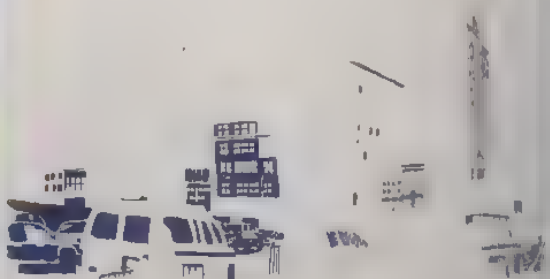
A third way to do the exercise is to begin the same as the last example with a series of vertical lines and then add a second series of lines half as long as the first, only this time hatch them over the first set at a 45-degree angle. Add another series of the length of the second series but hatching at a 45-degree angle but in the opposite direction.

EXERCISE:

LINE SHAPE AND PATTERN

THE OBJECT OF THIS EXERCISE IS TO DEAL WITH A DRAWING IN PURELY GRAPHIC INFORMATION USING ONLY FLAT LINE, PATTERN, AND SHAPE (AS OPPOSED TO USING LIGHT OR VALUE TO DEFINE FORM, AND STIPPLING OR HATCHING TO DESCRIBE GRADATION AND VALUE)

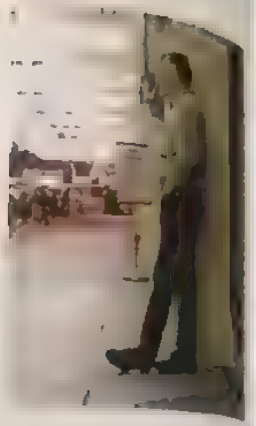




The subject must first be broken down graphically, which can be done by starting with a pencil drawing, though this is not necessary. In this drawing, any middle tone—that is, anything not a solid black shape or an outline—will be described by a graphic pattern (in the case of this image parallel lines) that is flat and does not convey space.

First identify how each shape will be treated: which ones will be outlines, solid shapes, or patterns. Next, draw the outline. All of the lines must be treated with an even weight. An even weight will abstract the line, making everything flat, understating the illusion of space, and bringing forward each element as an abstraction, calling attention to the abstraction instead of the illusion. In this particular example, the windows become as much an abstract pattern as the parallel lines used to describe the mid-tones.

Next, choose one of the other elements (solid shape or pattern) and fill it in everywhere it appears in the image. In this instance, it may be best to fill in all of the solid shapes. Block in all of these. Understand where the positive and negative areas will be. (This is easiest if you start with a pencil sketch of the composition.)

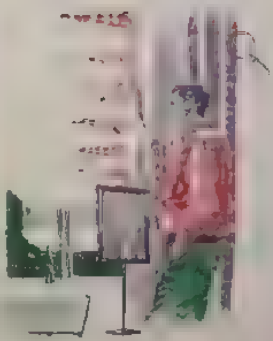


EXERCISE

GRAPHIC COLOR

THE VARIATIONS IN BALL POINT COLOR ARE NOT AS EXTENSIVE AS IN METAL [illegible] COLORED PENS. SO THE COLORS TEND TO BE PRIMARY [illegible] EACH COLOR REPRESENTED IS NAMELY BLUE, RED AND [illegible] LINE ENCLOSED AND [illegible] FILLED

It's about 15 an [illegible] the remain of the composition [illegible] have to cross on the [illegible] with the parts, the [illegible] simple [illegible] drawing [illegible] should be drawn [illegible] shapes [illegible] parts, [illegible] of each shape [illegible]

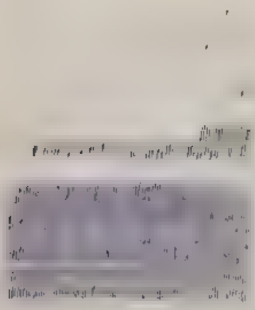


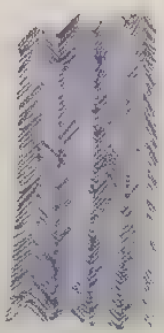
[illegible] altering the image down in [illegible] elements [illegible] interesting [illegible] the negative space by elements [illegible] instead consider leaving out [illegible] amount of [illegible] see how [illegible] the image [illegible] by repetition. While [illegible] consider what the [illegible] image needs are also [illegible] can be [illegible]

EXERCISE:

REPETITIVE MARKS

A MARK CAN BE USED TO CREATE AN ENTIRE FIELD OF SHADING OR BE REPEATED TO FILL A SPACE. THE OBJECT OF THIS EXERCISE IS TO EXPLORE VARIOUS WAYS TO USE MARKS TO CREATE PATTERNS AND REPETITIVE [illegible]



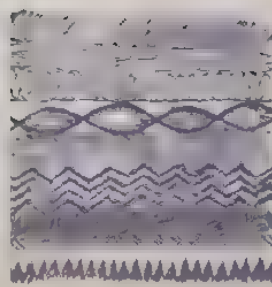


The easiest way to start is to create a single mark and then repeat it [illegible] [illegible] will [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] the mark [illegible] repeated [illegible] and [illegible]

[illegible] the same length [illegible] [illegible] Be [illegible] the [illegible] pattern [illegible]

Next, base this mark at an angle of 45 degrees. Create a row of these marks. To make the pattern more interesting, in the next row [illegible] the mark [illegible] 45 degrees in the opposite direction and begin to fill the page with this mark. The pattern [illegible] the same mark as the [illegible] pattern [illegible] and the same [illegible] the [illegible] interesting because [illegible] rather than [illegible] pattern.

Now explore more variations with the simple mark. Instead of rows [illegible] draw a circle, and inside and around the perimeter, draw the basic [illegible] This will [illegible] create an [illegible] in the middle of the [illegible] Continue making [illegible] of [illegible] until [illegible]



[illegible] more complicated create [illegible] shape and fill with a cash [illegible] images [illegible] screen with six dashes in a row [illegible] subsequent [illegible] the other sides, however the [illegible] previous one. This will create [illegible] marks. Make sure [illegible] the marks of [illegible] areas are never. Each [illegible] the zigzag [illegible] the random angles—[illegible] energy and expression, [illegible] create [illegible] are

Try different ways of filling shapes [illegible] using [illegible] varying marks and marks at [illegible]

[illegible] of these examples are variations [illegible] a single mark which is rather [illegible] and [illegible] the same [illegible] different marks in [illegible] 40 degrees [illegible] 45 degrees [illegible] row [illegible] Try [illegible] will have each [illegible] marks. [illegible] the [illegible] the random [illegible] in a new way [illegible] vertical [illegible]

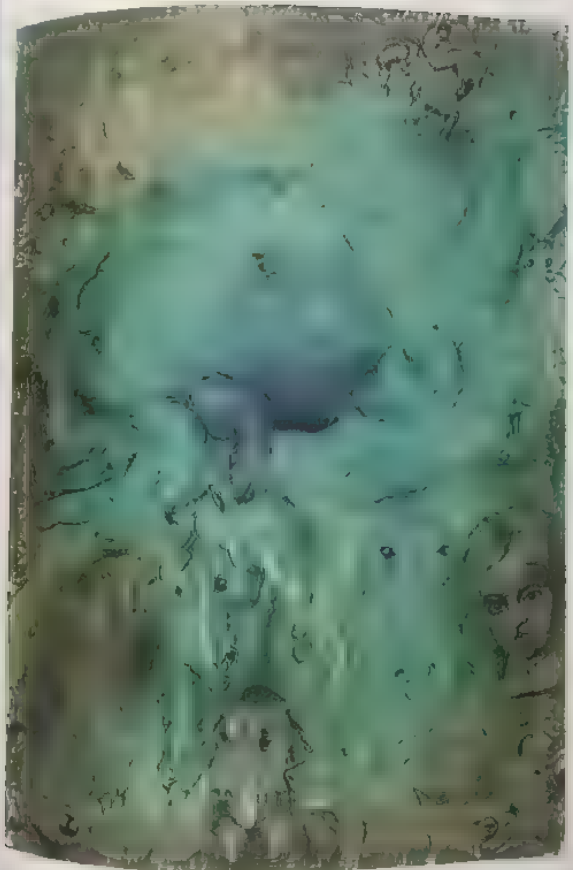
CHAPTER 5:
SKETCHBOOK ART

In the past decade, there has been a surge of interest in sketchbooks and location drawing that revolve around the use of portable mediums. Central to this is the ballpoint pen. Although everyone's approach to sketchbooks is unique, there are considerable similarities among the new wave of sketch enthusiasts. Often ballpoint is mixed with other media, such as watercolor for toning and white acrylic for highlights (similar to something a classical draftsperson would use). Also, there is the tendency to layer images on top of each other, so the drawing can often become very dense. An interplay between the observed and the imagined can also be seen. The tendency is usually toward a less self-conscious, unrestrained approach to drawing. What makes ballpoint unique to this format is its durability and portability. The ink in ballpoint is not water-soluble, so it works well with wet media, and as a result, it layers well, or cohabitates, with other media. It's not messy and does not smudge easily.

FEATURED ARTIST:

JEAN-PIERRE ARBOLEDA

[illegible] MAR[illegible] PAINTER [illegible] DRAWINGS AND [illegible] ON PAPER TONED WITH WATERCOLOR [illegible] SES ACRYLIC WASHES FOR DEPTH AND HIGHLIGHTS.



EXPLORING TECHNIQUE: MIXING MEDIA

Jean-Pierre uses acrylic washes to wash over ballpoint lines, lightening them and pushing them back in space to differentiate between layered lines and to pull forward and articulate other lines. This method gives his drawings a deeper sense of space. In instances where the highlight is too bright and pops forward in space too much, he'll use a transparent acrylic wash slightly darker than the ground (similar to watercolor) to subtly push it back again.

His drawings come mostly from his imagination. He has studied the anatomies of humans and animals extensively, making him familiar enough with the musculature of both to create imaginary poses and hybrids between the two. Although he still uses photo reference to elaborate on his figures and make them more convincing, he is not beholden to the reference.

Jean-Pierre's compositional process will start with a simple drawing, usually a single figure. If it works, and he likes the drawing, he will leave it as is. These small drawings accumulate over time, and sometimes he'll use them as references, piecing them together into larger ballpoint compositions by redrawing them and layering the elements into an orchestra of figures and animals.

His drawings tend to be done for their own sake (as opposed to sketches for larger works), with the focus being on line, whereas his paintings are tonal. These two ideas about creating form are distinctly separate to him, and only sometimes will a drawing lead to or inspire a painting.

LINES AND LIGHTING

[illegible] drawing with the pages [illegible] is of the [illegible] intensity of [illegible] making [illegible] made it [illegible] more [illegible] moment [illegible] was [illegible]

[illegible] by his lines [illegible] Pierre [illegible] what he [illegible] interested [illegible] drawing. As he [illegible] answers [illegible] the [illegible] how the energy [illegible] across the [illegible] The [illegible] lines are [illegible] around the [illegible] but on of energy across [illegible] apart and [illegible] more [illegible] whereas lines [illegible] indicate [illegible] energy [illegible]

Further [illegible] expressionist [illegible] by [illegible] darkness of [illegible] pressure, weight and volume.

The lighting Jean Pierre's drawing [illegible] and [illegible] by [illegible] reality, making [illegible] referenced from other [illegible] drawing, for the same space. The lighting [illegible] the light [illegible] spot [illegible] imaginary. He [illegible] as have [illegible] a growing [illegible] within a light from above [illegible] a light [illegible] behind angels [illegible] [illegible] determines the angle of his [illegible] shadows [illegible] the [illegible] the [illegible] knowing [illegible] light [illegible] and [illegible] transition [illegible] squeak and [illegible]

[illegible] are even on flat space. Jean Pierre [illegible] his lines and hatches more [illegible] degrees of shadow [illegible] light [illegible] and light [illegible] spread out to [illegible] the [illegible] light. The shadow [illegible] the square [illegible] the more [illegible] contrast will be [illegible] Pierre says, "These and [illegible] light [illegible] with my subject matter [illegible] struggle [illegible] transcendence [illegible] literature."

ANIMALS

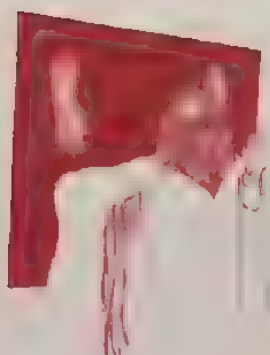
Animals [illegible] the frog have a symbolic and nostalgic value. Frogs are mainly associated with water, its cleansing, attributes and transformative power. Shown [illegible] Frog, Jean Pierre was [illegible] by many kinds of [illegible] frogs [illegible] as the petroleum [illegible] have been [illegible] extinct [illegible] their places [illegible] rain forest [illegible] have been finding that frogs are usually [illegible] animals to be impacted by the changes [illegible] environment [illegible] their very fragile biological makeup.

Jean Pierre draws his frog [illegible] with the [illegible] reference [illegible] transformation from tadpole [illegible] and to show the frog transformed [illegible] elements [illegible] speak [illegible] pollution of [illegible] environment. The symbolic [illegible] with the transforming frog speaks to her transcendent and transformative power [illegible] and animals.

FEATURED ARTIST:

MELISSA LING

MELISSA LING IS A NARRATIVE ARTIST WORKING MOSTLY IN THE FIELD OF ILLUSTRATION. HER WORK COMBINES AN ASSORTMENT OF MEDIUMS, INCLUDING ACRYLIC, OIL, CHARCOAL, GRAPHITE, AND INK. HER ILLUSTRATIONS APPEAR IN MAGAZINES, AND SHE SELF-PUBLISHES HANDMADE BOOKS OF HER WORK, EXHIBITS HER DRAWINGS IN GALLERIES, AND KEEPS REGULAR SKETCHBOOKS.



EXPLORING TECHNIQUE: INTERPRETING THEMES THROUGH THE MEDIUM

The narratives in Melissa's work are inspired by movies, books, memories, and dreams. She will strip an image down to its bare essentials, forcing the viewer to focus in on very specific moments. The moments are divorced from a context and often stripped down to one or two elements, making them mysterious. The drawings feel like moments in time the way snapshots do, but because of their handling, the very fact that they are drawings allows the viewer to be pulled into the moment and invited to contemplate the details. Her assumption is that people tend to overlook things that do not fit their basic perception, and by stripping the drawing down to the bare elements, it's easier to reflect on what is left.

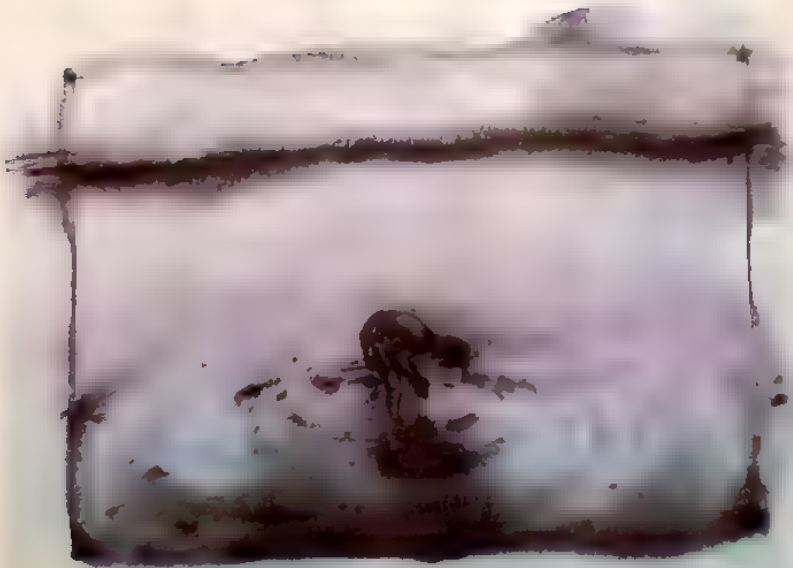
Melissa expresses dream logic in her drawings through inversions and opposites: the air feels heavy and the ground feels light, a close-up of a face has the details blurred. The silence in her work holds a tension, a feeling she is recalling from her childhood. She constantly returns to the repository of her memories out of a need for answers, and this is the source of the mood in her drawings.

The way Melissa uses the pen, distorting it with water, painting over it with acrylic, and interpreting her subjects this way, creates the sense of an unpredictable circumstance. The balance of tightly rendered detail in a drawing with loose washes of watercolor spread on top makes the ballpoint ink run, bleeding into the watercolor: this helps channel the emotional weight of her narratives into the drawing.

Below
[illegible]
Fallen [illegible]
and watercolor
6 x 8 inches
(15 x 20.5 cm)

Opposite
[illegible]
and charcoal
9½ x 7½ inches
(25 x 19 cm)

M[illegible] ing use of water plays into my f[illegible] opposite fee[illegible]ngs. A lot of [illegible]mages that I a[illegible] drawn [illegible] where e[illegible]emen[illegible]s fee[illegible] dream[illegible]ke or what we perceive to be normal fee[illegible]s abnorma[illegible] I have always felt that [illegible] could [illegible] work fr[illegible]m what [illegible] knew firsthand [illegible] do, [illegible]m try[illegible]ng to captu[illegible]e a moment of persona[illegible] which [illegible]ron[illegible]ally leads to pa[illegible]nt[illegible]ng over certa[illegible]n e[illegible] obscuring more rendered areas."



GETTING STARTED AND MIXING MEDIUMS

[illegible] Melissa [illegible] remember [illegible] and go from there. Besides the basic [illegible] preliminary planning is done [illegible] composition [illegible] is important for her [illegible] every aspect of [illegible] the [illegible] will look and [illegible] just [illegible] react [illegible]

The decision [illegible] what feels right at the time. If she is working on a tender [illegible] ballpoint drawing and it feels [illegible] too rigid, she [illegible] charcoal to make looser.

She sees ballpoint as a great medium [illegible] detailed makes yet [illegible] marks [illegible] Shes [illegible] water to the [illegible] spread [illegible] form into shapes [illegible] spread [illegible] and expand differently every time. Water also allows colors to mix on the [illegible] watercolor. When she sets a very detailed drawing [illegible] the breeds kind together and [illegible] much [illegible] have been made with ballpoint pen.

SKETCHBOOK PRACTICES

Melissa [illegible] ballpoint [illegible] be found mostly in her sketchbooks, but also to a lesser degree [illegible] gallery work. [illegible] the access [illegible] the pen offers that attracts her to [illegible]

She carries her sketchbook with her working out mostly on [illegible] studio, [illegible] sometimes, she will start a sketchbook page with just marks, no references. She will bring a small [illegible] of art supplies, usually a few pens and pencils, and appreciates the challenge of being [illegible] a set of materials and environment. She [illegible] marks on newspapers, coffee cups, whatever is around, to create shapes and look [illegible] her sketchbook.

When [illegible] she picks up a few books [illegible] depending on the [illegible] and permits [illegible] combine drawing from [illegible] composition [illegible] needs something else [illegible] be squeezed [illegible] moment she will [illegible] the page [illegible] stage. When starting a new sketchbook there is no [illegible] theme. Making [illegible] will evolve and [illegible] of experiments and processes [illegible] working back and forth between pages, overlapping [illegible] capture makes [illegible] images evolve over [illegible] page that [illegible] of the page [illegible] Sketchbooks are the journeys [illegible] makes it [illegible]

Along with her sketchbooks, Melissa also self-publishes books of her drawings, although the two are quite different. The published books represent a cleaner, more curated project, something that she feels is more direct in the ideas she is trying to convey. They represent a more realized narrative, whereas the sketchbook evolves over time.

WORKING FROM REFERENCE

Photography plays a large role in Melissa's drawings. They can provide starting points into a new drawing. She will sometimes work from her own photos, but also from photos in books and online that she finds intriguing, and she also collects used photos of strangers.

For Melissa, a photograph has this extraordinary power to turn any scene into a significant moment because it doesn't differentiate between what is "real" and what is not. She uses this same approach for her own work by capturing what feels significant and not letting herself be distracted by what something is supposed to be. Sometimes, she'll work from bad-quality printouts because of the way the shapes are broken down. This way, she can disregard whatever the image was and use it as a basis of what it could be.

[illegible]

[illegible] abstract [illegible]

[illegible] es out

[illegible] for answers which is

[illegible] ng to come to terms with

[illegible] on realize that

[illegible] a lot of my

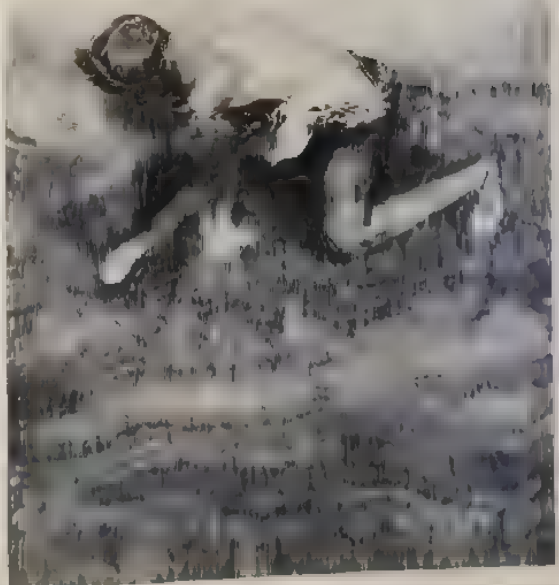
[illegible] oration I want

[illegible] we... for

them to contemplate rather than

[illegible] for them to connect with

[illegible] work on the terms



FEATURED ARTIST:

MU PAN

MU PAN IS BEST KNOWN FOR HIS ELABORATE LARGE-SCALE ARCHIVAL AND WATERCOLOR PAINTINGS THAT FUSE JAPANESE, CHINESE, AND AMERICAN HISTORIES AND POPULAR CULTURES INTO EPIC ALLEGORIES WITH NO DISTINCTION BETWEEN HISTORY AND IMAGINATION. HIS OLDEST TOOL OF CHOICE, HOWEVER, IS THE BALLPOINT PEN.

EXPLORING TECHNIQUE: MATERIALS

When Mu was growing up [illegible] he would staple sheets [illegible] together to make sketchbooks [illegible]. When Mu was drawing with a pencil he had to sharpen it [illegible] when it became dull [illegible] was [illegible] for him to use such a sharp [illegible] It would get annoyed having to constantly sharpen pencils [illegible]. Out of convenience, he started using a ballpoint pen and became used to it over time. When he was a child, there was only [illegible] in two colours, red and blue.

Today Mu uses ballpoint pen as the main drawing tool in his sketchbook. He draws with an SKB [illegible] from Taiwan which has a very fine tip and B[illegible]

For the sketchbooks, when he was younger he wanted to be [illegible] so he bought [illegible] hard-bound sketchbooks with a leather cover and high quality paper. Later he used sketchbooks his wife made him, and now he uses whatever he can get for free.

IMAGERY

When starting a drawing, Mu lays down only the rough shapes [illegible] comes from his imagination in pen [illegible] then starts [illegible] drawing [illegible] the [illegible] in [illegible] and go from there [illegible] his instinct [illegible] how he feels about the drawing [illegible] the composition [illegible]. The finished drawing rarely resembles what he had originally imagined.

Most of the imagery in Mu's drawings comes from his imagination [illegible] he rarely uses photos. Mu is capable of drawing most things from his imagination [illegible] certain things he will find reference. He won't copy directly from the reference [illegible] to rely on [illegible] uses it to get a [illegible] idea of what [illegible] unique [illegible] his method is to use the reference and not be used by it.

He [illegible] practises [illegible] drawing as a way to [illegible] in his imagination. The practice of drawing [illegible] the figures [illegible] him like putting money in the bank. You put your money in the bank whenever you have some extra, and of course it [illegible] how much money you have saved, it will still never be enough. It's the same with practicing; it will constantly [illegible] your ability of observation and you always see the figure differently from one time to the next. [illegible] drawing gives him the skills to be able to work confidently from his imagination.

KEEPING A SKETCHBOOK AND A DAILY ROUTINE

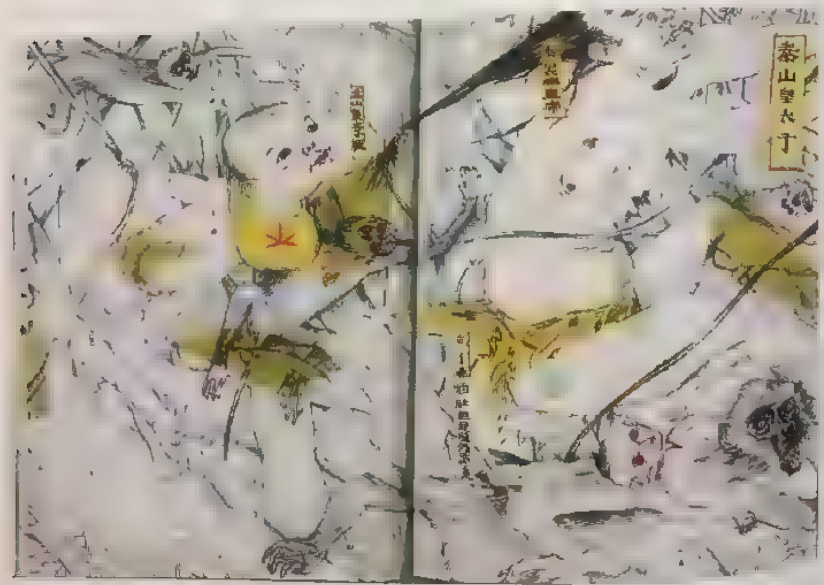
Mu [illegible] Friday from 9:00 in the morning [illegible] in the afternoon and aga[illegible] evening unti[illegible] 11:00 p.m. On Saturdays, he usually goes to life drawings at a friend's place, and on Sundays he draws in his sketchbook for his own entertainment.

Mu's paintings and sketchbooks are equal forms of art, though. His sketchbooks are purely personal, sometimes of a more vulgar nature, and his paintings and large scale drawings are an extension of the ideas in his sketchbooks. His method of execution for both paintings and sketchbooks is the same (to start with a rough pencil sketch of the compositional shapes).

[illegible] k as if it were a [illegible] me he was [illegible] ng [illegible] is late twenties. For a period [illegible] n for his sketchbooks, [illegible] keeping them once agai[illegible] was 100 days old, and the sketchbook features Kaede as the hero and himself as the sidekick, fighting monsters and creating chaos. He calls these drawings Kaede's Sunday Adventures. It is like a fictionalized weekly documentary made only for his own pleasure, a world he gets to create and imagine himself and his son into.

CULTURAL BACKGROUND

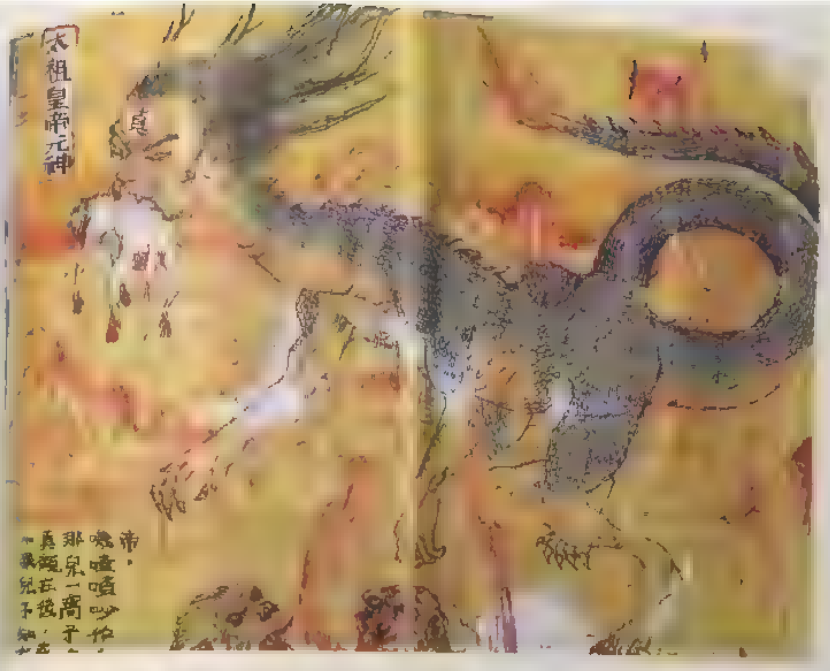
Growing up in Taiwan, Mu was su[illegible] by traditional Chinese culture. He developed an appreciation for Chinese and Japanese history and also had access to both Japanese and American pop culture. His work is a cross-section of these interests, a combination of his obsessions. His decisions on what to include in his paintings is not so specific, beyond combining the elements of pop culture and history that he enjoys and creating narratives from his obsessions for his own pleasure. "They are the same to me. They are all popular any way."



墓 位
太 祖
太 宗

The imagery in Mu's drawings—the giant animals, soldiers, cultural references and Chinese script—is very specific, and to fully understand it, the audience would need to know what the artist knows: to have read the books he has read, watched the movies he has watched, and known the history that he knows. In other words, these may be historic and cultural reference points, but more accurately, this is Mu's imagination, and as such, his concern is not with an audience's need to understand his references, though it's not to exclude the audience either. He believes that the understanding is irrelevant. Mu's own interest in the subject matter—the significance it has for him [illegible] the energy that drives the work, the fuel that inspires [illegible] his desire to entertain himself drives his ability to create an image that becomes greater than an ode to his inspiration or a dedication to his obsession. His obsessions become his puppets, characters under his control.

He believes the layering of references will create images that allow people to interpret and read into what they like. It also allows for people with the same interests, people who understand the history of the references, to read deeper and gain more insight into Mu's imagination.



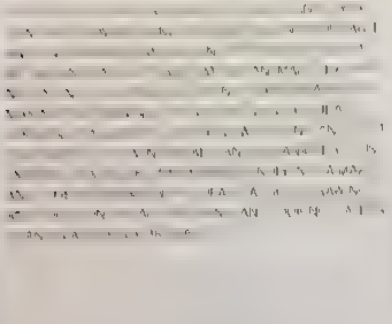
RELATING TO THE MONSTERS

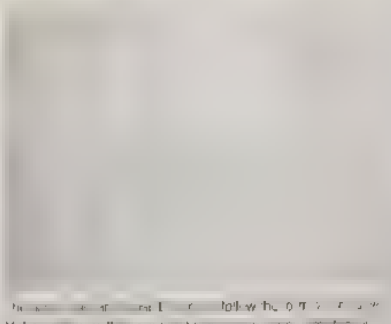
Every a man in giant form he draws has a purpose nothing s random They sometimes represent the powe and strength that Mu is thirsty for and he enjoys watch ng them destroy or being destroyed There are two reasons he ll draw someone either he oves or hates that person to death He loves strength and power and hates many th ngs around him. These strong emotions drive his mage making. Without the energy that flows from them, he can't create.

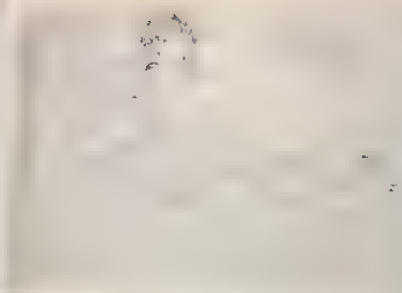
BALLPOINT REFLECTIONS

"I guess subconsciously am looking for an audience who can understand what I am making in my work," Mu says. "I don t want to explain anything about the image or for the image I believe that if the person gets it he vil smile and approve of what do or get offended as well Maybe that's the way I am layers of confusion and being sarcastic all the time, and I never care how people think of me They are my stories, and they are also the stories for nothing Different audiences will interpret my work the way they wish and find their own associations."

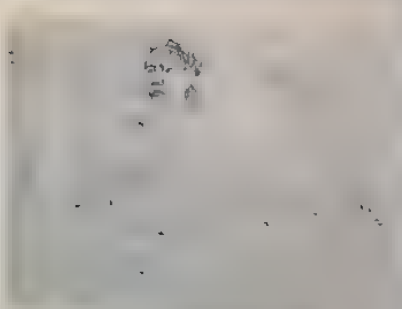
CONTOUR DRAWING







[illegible] the image is capable of changing position and scale and be seen from a new point of view. Begin the second rendering, [illegible] of the first, but over part of the same [illegible] stations. This [illegible] where the [illegible] may have [illegible] destroyed the previous subject will be lost or abstracted by the average.



Continue this process through several cycles of changes. The composition will become more and more [illegible] [illegible] such as the exact [illegible] will [illegible] stitch [illegible] will reflect the [illegible] Experiment with different color [illegible] as well.

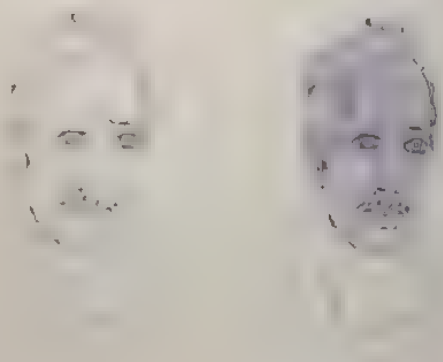
[illegible] with [illegible] and depth. Try not to make everything look like it [illegible] distance, so move in closer to the subject and the [illegible] foreground elements and depths are represented.

Since the composition [illegible] may be helpful [illegible] developing [illegible] of [illegible] drawing [illegible] composed shading. A [illegible] rules [illegible] a more [illegible] spherical, avoid [illegible] other lines and [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] in composing a [illegible] drawing.

EXERCISE:

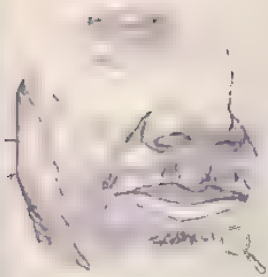
CREATING A LIGHT SOURCE

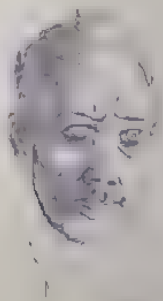
[illegible]

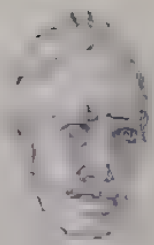


[illegible]

[illegible]







Begin with a light source from above. Cast shadows under the eyebrows, nose and [illegible] following the guidelines in the previous study. Experiment in this same manner from different angles.

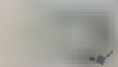
Next, show a light source from the right.

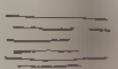
Finally, show the same image with a light source from the left.

EXERCISE:

SHADING WITH WATERCOLOR

[illegible] BALLPOINT PENS [illegible] THICKNESS [illegible] THE AREAS [illegible] THE ACCOUNT [illegible] AND DISPERSATION WITH [illegible] WATER [illegible] AN IMPORTANT DISTINCTION [illegible] EXPERIMENTING WITH WATERSOLUBLE MATERIAL [illegible] WATERPROOF [illegible] CAN [illegible] WITH THE [illegible] BALLPOINT. [illegible] THAT YOU CAN BE [illegible] FOR OVER AND WON'T BE [illegible] BUT [illegible] ALL [illegible] WHICH AS [illegible] BALLPOINT THE WATERSOLUBLE INK WILL [illegible]

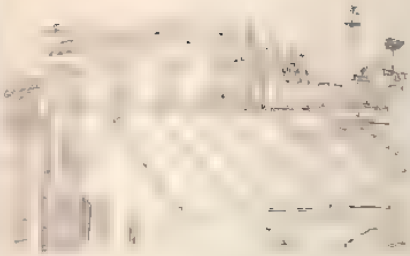




Test the wash as it is on a piece of paper. The first wash is [illegible] to establish a consistent [illegible] the range from darkest to lightest.

A [illegible] ballpoint ink is waterproof [illegible] with water [illegible] or a scalpel [illegible] paper. Even though you have [illegible] there are [illegible] and that can occur when water [illegible] but [illegible] colored inks being used, it may [illegible] with the water and [illegible] an unexpected [illegible] and begin to make the lines of the drawing swell [illegible] eating a slightly heavier line than [illegible] and blurred.

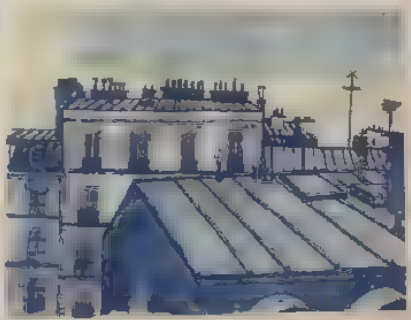
The goal of this exercise is to explore how to use watercolor and ballpoint together. Watercolor can [illegible] a good tonal and shading medium. When [illegible] using watercolor to [illegible] over a ballpoint, it is important to start the drawing with the intention of adding watercolor later. This means knowing what the watercolor will be used for and leaving room open for it in the drawing. Watercolor will be used to create shadow, then the ballpoint drawing should be [illegible] in the [illegible] to add shadow with two different mediums. If you [illegible] shadows [illegible] made by say cross-hatching, then it is perhaps [illegible] effective to add one on the same area with watercolor.



[illegible] a drawing completely out of line, describing only shapes and contour, no shadow. To keep things clear and simple, the watercolor should be divided into three values: a dark value, a mid-tone, and a light, almost transparent shade. More than this runs the risk of making the image murky. The subject may have a wider range of tones, but this is an easy way of simplifying the [illegible] in the [illegible]

To understand a clearer sense of the values in the subject of the drawing—to simplify the information as much as possible—it helps to squint at the subject so that all of the detail disappears, and all that is left are the more general pieces of information. This makes it easier to identify which forms will be described by the three tones (white is the fourth tone, in fact, so always leave the white of the paper for the whitest white).

[illegible]ify the next two tones in the subject: think of the lighter of the two, the next lightest value other than white. Consider all of the lightest parts of the image that are not white, and paint these with the lighter of the two remaining values. The remaining value [illegible]



Once the image is broken down into these three values [illegible] with white, this can be the end of the image, or it can be the ground upon which more refined detail is built.

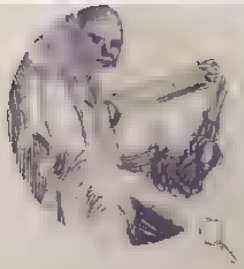
EXERCISE

LAYERING BALLPOINT AND ACRYLIC

To test how this works, create a square filled in with ballpoint so it is dark. Look at a photo or draw from life and focus only on the highlights of the subject. Allow the dark of the ink to be the shadows and pull out the highlights with acrylic. Start with a wash to describe the forms and add the opaque for the true whites. This will give an idea of how the two materials relate to each other.

For a larger example, create a ballpoint drawing that is fully composed but not resolved. The drawing is one that will be refined, so draw it quickly and use a lot of energy; this is not a precious drawing, but a loose sketch that will be built up over time. There should be no pencil drawing, so draw straight to paper with pen and do not labor over mistakes.

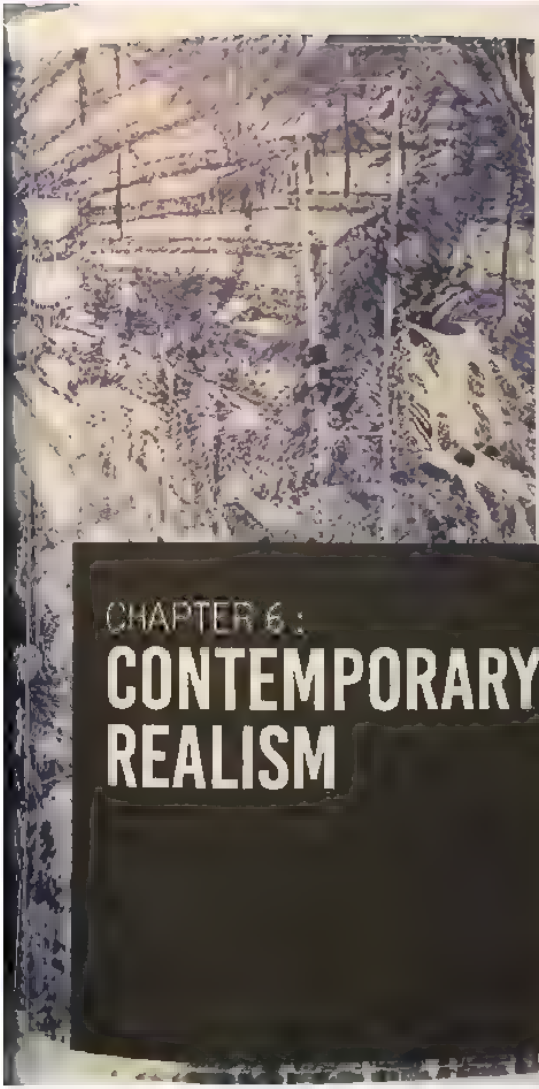
ACRYLIC IS A GOOD MEDIUM TO USE FOR ADJUST NG BALLPOINT PEN BECAUSE BALLPOINT HAS NO ERASER, CLEAN NG UP M STAKES ARE OTHERWISE IMPOSSIBLE THERE ARE TWO WAYS TO USE ACRYLIC ON BALLPOINT OPAQUELY AND TRANSPARENTLY OPAQUE IS GOOD FOR FIXING MISTAKES, BR NG NG OUT THE WHITE OF THE PAGE AND ADDING SHARP HIGHLIGHTS TRANSPARENT S FOR ADDING DEPTH PUSHING LINES BACK N SPACE AND GENERALLY CREAT NG MORE DEPTH



[illegible] step [illegible] to refine the areas where [illegible] made [illegible] detail s to be [illegible] The [illegible] will be a drawing [illegible] with [illegible] drawing. Hands [illegible] focus on [illegible] the areas that [illegible] with [illegible] Ballpoint [illegible] over acrylic so the texture [illegible] will be more or less the same [illegible] paper

Once the acrylic dries, continue to rework [illegible] the painted areas and build up the rest. The drawing will [illegible] these painted areas [illegible] transparent layer over the ballpoint will soften [illegible] as well and lend precise [illegible] more del[illegible] the illusion of a more tonal drawing, [illegible] like a painting. Building [illegible] on top of [illegible] a deeper [illegible]

As the details of the figure are added or working [illegible] the [illegible] areas [illegible] developing [illegible] drawing [illegible] only the [illegible] [illegible] the hand [illegible] [illegible]



CHAPTER 6 :

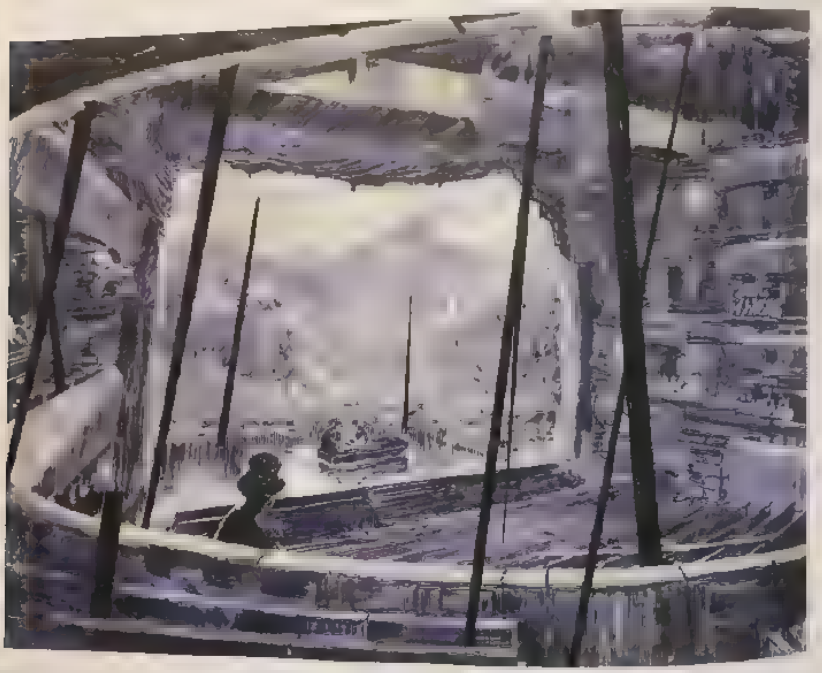
CONTEMPORARY REALISM

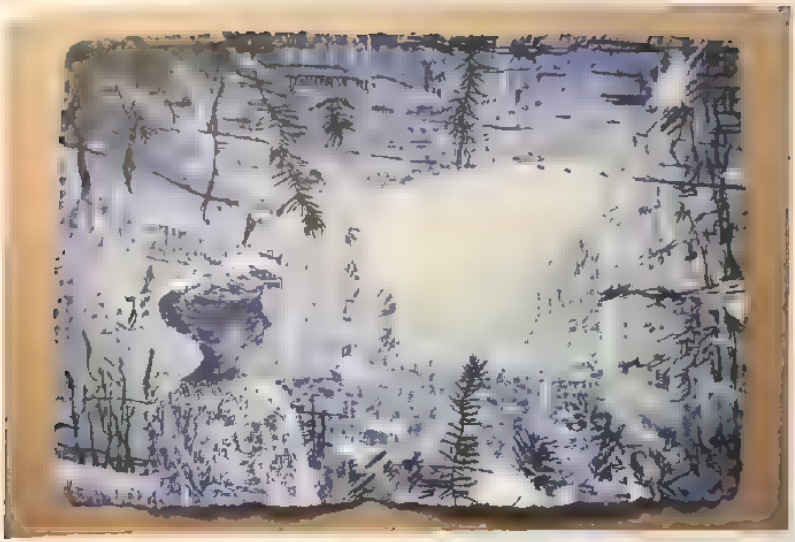
with how the subject is observed

FEATURED ARTIST:

DOMINIQUE VANGILBERGEN

DOMINIQUE VANGILBERGEN VIEWS HIMSELF AS A STORYTELLER WHO DOES NOT TELL THE WHOLE STORY. LIKE AN ILLUSIONIST IN A THEATER USING MIRROR AND MIRRORS, HE CHOOSES NOT TO GUIDE PEOPLE THROUGH THE NARRATIVE, BUT RATHER FACILITATES AN EXPERIENCE THAT ALLOWS VIEWERS TO READ INTO THEIR OWN INTERPRETATION OF THE WORK. THE OBJECTIVE IS TO SUGGEST AND EVOKE A MOOD TO STAGE AND IMPLY A NARRATIVE, WITHOUT TELLING ONE.





Opera, [illegible] (B), 2013

[illegible]

The subjects and settings in Dominique's drawings mostly deal with the characters, the people inhabiting these images, and their relationship to nature. Nature is usually in some controlled or curated format, such as a greenhouse, a theater, or a deserted settlement on a mountain. The people in these scenarios, people who are often left in negative space to imply the presence as well the absence of others, suggest the presence of an audience for the drawing. The subjects being viewed in the drawing are a parallel to the drawing itself. They echo the audience's experience created by Dominique.

EXPLORING TECHNIQUE: ORGANIZING VALUE

Dominique's drawings are primarily ballpoint pen, but traces of watercolor, spray paint, and charcoal can also be found.

His drawings typically consist of grand spaces, large-scale environments inhabited by a figure or figures, usually simplified graphically or left in negative white space that contrast with the environment's meticulous detail. The size of the figure, usually small in comparison to the landscape, establishes scale, reinforcing the expanse of the environment that dominates the figure. The space is also enhanced by the attention paid to the organization of value. Dominique breaks his spaces up into a clear foreground, middle ground, and background, a deep space that allows for a cinematic "mise-en-scène."

Opera is a good example of how this works. The environment is divided spatially with values, the woman closest to the viewer is darkest and highest in contrast, which pulls her closer to the viewer spatially. The audience in the middle ground has a wash over them, so there are no strong highlights

drawing, she is th

[illegible] a specific range of values [illegible] a specific space, and that space is not [illegible] the darkest dark in the back will never be as dark [illegible] and [illegible] dea keeps the values and details [illegible] each of their [illegible] pecific spatial depths

WORKING WITH DETAIL AND MAINTAINING CLARITY

Dominique works in layers of drawing within his images (layering the drawing in step by step from light to dark, moving from the lightest details in the beginning to the darkest at the end) as a way of controlling the clarity and detail, but it is a process that takes a lot of time. It's a slow and intensive method that can at times be more like putting marks on paper than making an image.

Contrast is an important way that Dominique structures his drawing, another way of aiding the clarity. Examples of how he uses contrast are putting a hard object next to a soft one, or sparse or negative space next to detailed objects. This contrast works both as a technical device and adds to the concept. Sometimes this will inevitably lead to areas of the drawing getting overworked then the light is gone and it's lost for good. When that happens, Dominique leaves it because it is part of the process: paper is finite and what is drawn is exactly what is seen, so he must commit to the mistakes like overworking an area as well.

Building the drawing up in stages lets Dominique organize the value range and create depth, allowing him to employ a greater amount of detail while maintaining a high degree of clarity. By deciding in advance that each level of depth will have a specific range of value, Dominique keeps all of the details in a specific space, and that space is not confused with any other space. The darkest dark in the back will never be as dark as the darkest dark in the foreground, and this idea keeps the values and details separate and distinct within each of their specific spatial depths. Another term for this is establishing a hierarchy with the values.

ENLARGING DRAWINGS BY HAND

Collages of different images, which are not very big, form the basis of Dominique's drawings, and this is how he starts his process. Over the collage he puts a series of intersecting lines. The same lines are used on the larger paper the drawing will be done on. This allows for Dominique to have a matching set of guides, one smaller over the collage and a corresponding larger one on the drawing paper for lining up the content of the collage, essentially scaling the drawing up, but in a manual way without the use of computers or mechanical reproduction. This works the way a pantograph scales up an image, but all by hand.

MARK MAKING

marks Dominique makes with his e not only sed as shading, looking closely most shapes are assigned or identified with a particular type of mark. The textures of various surfaces are broken down and assigned graphic marks and patterns for shading. The shading helps create a sense of illusionism, but the marks and patterns abstract the illusion and provide a sense of importance to each mark and shadow. For example, in *Paradise Lost*, very delicate marks describe the rocks and mountains, and very gestural marks are used for the dark sky. These marks make every object feel unique and distinct.

His use of marks is intended to be somewhat cold and emotionless, like a rubber stamp, purely functional in how it contributes to the overall image. Dominique thinks of it as a game of marking the paper. It can sometimes feel more like writing more than drawing, where his marks become the vocabulary he is writing with. All of this is not so much a conscious strategy or plan as a means of making the drawing work, overplanning would destroy the spontaneity. Dominique's drawing process is more of a reaction or a way to process information as he draws it.

The audience's participation brings the narrative full circle. It is how the audience interprets the scene or how it completes the story. To Dominique, the world looks like a [illegible] or where the audience tries to give meaning to the [illegible] ns in front of them. "Sometimes like to fog the [illegible] he says. "People often invent their own explanations for my pieces. I create a theater around them. It's flattering, but sometimes it is literally just a few marks made with a ballpoint pen, everything is open to interpretation."

FIGURES IN RELATIONSHIP TO SPACE

In Dominique's work, the relationship between the characters and the setting is inspired by the figure/ground relationships in the etchings of Jacques Callot, a Baroque master printmaker of the sixteenth century. Callot puts the figure in full scale in front of the landscape, and it dominates the image. He provides a lot of information about the character, which was his job in those days. Dominique works in the negative sense, adding the figure or all information. This is again a way of emphasizing the solidity and loneliness of the figure. Each figure has a materiality and a substance, indeed a witness of the narrative, even if the figure is recessed or inlaid into the image. Who that witness is, is a secondary issue.

Shadow, 2013
Ballpoint, watercolor, charcoal on paper
[illegible] inches

FEATURED ART ST:

DAWN CLEMENTS

LIKE MOST PEOPLE, DAWN CLEMENTS USES A [illegible] FOR ALL KINDS OF WR T NG WR [illegible] MAK NG SHOPPING LISTS OR [illegible] E ON THE TELEPHONE SHE ALWAYS [illegible] LEPOINT PEN WITH HER, WHICH IS HOW STARTED USING IT FOR HER DRAWING " A NATURAL WR TING NOTAT NG AND DRAWING TOOL, AS WELL AS A THINKING TOOL EVEN WHEN THERE'S NO TEXT IN A BALLPOINT PEN WORK THE VERY MARK OF BALLPOINT ENCOURAGES "READ NG," NOT JUST "V EWING "

There are many things about the calligraphy pen that appeal to those who [illegible] and [illegible] ness. It is the same kind of [illegible] that used for making [illegible] lettering [illegible]. Dawn. The marks of a black calligraphy pen are of exactly black [illegible] with a silvery sheen. To fill a shape [illegible] requires a lot of marks. While the calligraphy pen is [illegible] efficient and economical writing [illegible] making a drawing with a calligraphy pen can be time-consuming [illegible] forces the artist to slow down and be more [illegible]. This slow speed contributes [illegible] a slow, [illegible] viewing [illegible] when working with a brush. Dawn's gestures [illegible] faster and [illegible] engaging and [illegible] reading of an image. It is the slow, [illegible] of a calligraphy pen drawing that is attractive to her.

EXPLORING TECHNIQUE: FILM AS INSPIRATION AND REFERENCE

Dawn's work varies between large-scale [illegible] drawings. The larger [illegible] works have [illegible] very [illegible] will [illegible] serve a screen of [illegible] the artist's paper in the drawing to accelerate the [illegible] drawing [illegible] other than the drawing, extending to meet the edges of the paper. The [illegible] in her drawings range from [illegible] still lives and sometimes are drawn from [illegible] where the [illegible] is paused and she works directly from the screen. In these drawings, she will combine [illegible] together [illegible] a camera pan [illegible] single drawing, but [illegible] will [illegible] many shots of the same space [illegible] particular [illegible]. The stills are taken from various scenes in the movie and she will combine them together to create a larger more complete view. The room. Working from different angles [illegible] can create a distorted perspective of the room.

Dawn uses the pen as well as a variety of other mediums. She [illegible] watercolor, Sumi ink, [illegible] colored watercolor, gouache, [illegible] and pencil. She uses Sumi ink and brushes [illegible] well as [illegible] work [illegible] spaces [illegible] other immediate physical environment.

WORKING FROM FILM

[illegible] Dawn's [illegible] drawings [illegible] are [illegible] in [illegible] drawings [illegible] shots [illegible] Doug [illegible] Sirk, Max [illegible] Martin [illegible] Michael [illegible] Hitchcock, [illegible] Jacques [illegible] Alain [illegible] and Agnès Varda [illegible] and others.

Dawn chooses the characters whom she has some empathy. Although she understands [illegible] characters are fictional [illegible] she feels [illegible] involved in the film and is [illegible] as she is able as a [illegible] who is moved by the narrative. Could she [illegible] by [illegible] while [illegible] perhaps, [illegible] design [illegible] work.

Above:
Interior Drawings
(In Residence), 2002
Ballpoint pen on paper
[illegible] x 760 inches

Opposite:
Smoking
(Gelio), 1952, 2006
Ballpoint pen on paper
42 x 78 inches
(107 x 198 cm)

For her film work, Dawn depicts an interior (usually domestic) space that has the potential to express human conditions and that shows a sense of movement. This may not be presented in a single shot. Sometimes, the different parts of the room are revealed over the course of the film. This is usually determined by the character's movement, but not always. Dawn will study the film and log the time codes of all the shots that are interesting to her. She'll then "piece" the space(s) back together through drawing. Attempting to bring fragments together to make a seamless "whole" is akin to the construction of a traditional film narrative. In traditional films, the narrative usually doesn't occur in the time or space that the film represents. In a very fragmented manner, a traditional film works to create a representation of a seamless whole: a whole story, a whole period of time, a whole place, whole characters. This is achieved by highly abstract means.

Additionally, the figure is as much a combination of shapes as the surrounding space. For Dawn, all the shapes are equal and she tries not to emphasize any one more than another. The figures in her work are implicit, whether present or absent; the space implies the human presence, and so their absence from a drawing implies their presence as much as in the drawings where figures are visible. Her interest equally lies in the figure's surroundings that are always seen, but often unacknowledged.

In some of Dawn's earlier works, she would combine film shots from different movies to create a new spatial image of her own invention. These works had a sort of collage sensibility, but drawn, not cut and pasted. One of these drawings, *Gelio*, from 2002, was worked from a number of Italian thriller and horror films from the 1960s and 70s. She drew, piecemeal, a variety of hallway and stairway shots in an attempt to imply an endless passageway from which there was no visible escape.

STARTING A COMPOSITION

When starting a new drawing, Dawn usually has some kind of plan for the composition, but even when she thinks she knows what will happen in a work, something else might occur, and she remains open to the unexpected. She'll usually start with a generally rectangular piece of paper cut from a roll of paper. If the drawing needs to grow, she adds more paper. Unexpected problems may occur, and are always welcome, but sometimes the most frustrating problems end up drawing her in. They change the work, taking it in a new direction, something she embraces. Her process is very organic and something like crawling. Her eyes and hand move slowly across objects and the paper. Through this process, the image gradually expands.

When drawing from life, Dawn usually starts by drawing something before her. It could be anything. From that first mark, the drawing grows. She has a tendency to finish as she goes, resolving the thing in front of her and moving on, so in a way, the drawing is always finished and never finished. At some point, she'll decide it's complete. Sometimes it has to do with having done what she set out to do (such as a bouquet of flowers, a tabletop, or a room) and other times the point of completion is determined by a time limit (such as a two-month residency).

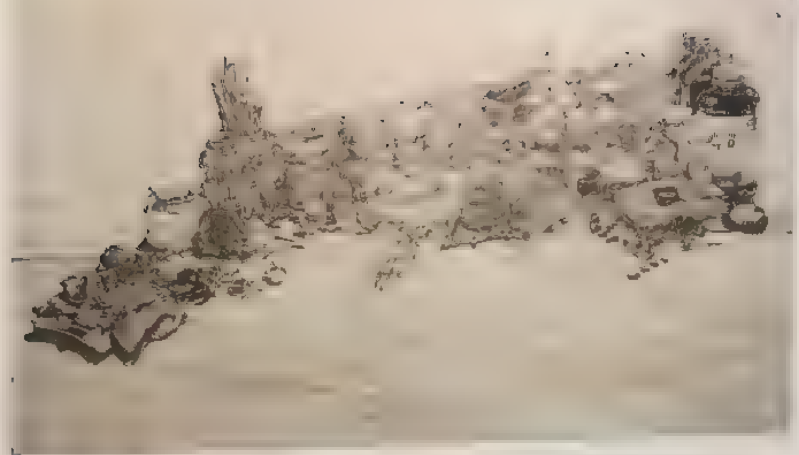
REPRESENTING TIME AND SPACE

Time and space are significant to her work. They affect her speed, her materials, and the physical objects she draws. Flowers bloom and die, fruit and vegetables wither and rot. Over the course of the work, she'll incorporate these changes. Sometimes she moves the objects themselves.

Because film is a time-based medium, her work from it slows the viewing experience, allowing the viewer to pass through the drawing or experience it over time; it is a stationary image, but one that cannot be taken in all at once. It must be moved through, thought about, and contemplated, the way a film is experienced over time and not all at once. The work unfolds, and the time that she puts into the drawing, the [illegible] the viewer once the work is done.

[illegible] viewpoints, not just a fixed view. This gives the sense that the space is not captured from a frozen moment or a single perspective in time. Despite being a stationary drawing, the image captures the sense of passing time, like in the movie [illegible]

[illegible] views may [illegible] convey stillness, but not frozenness. Dawn draws on paintings with [illegible] of multiple viewpoints, such as the work of Edward Hopper. Hopper composed his paintings from many, many drawings of places and figures. The drawings were made first, [illegible] the paintings were often made from the drawings [illegible] of the art show. Dawn sees these as Hopper's "actions," composed from "familiar



information on Hopper's paintings, there are some subjective interpretations. Dawn uses elements of the paintings to describe Mrs. Jessica Chase's homes. My representation of the kitchen was an active pattern and wallpaper which was excluded from the drawing. In the case of that particular work, the interest was in drawing the path of the characters' actions in the scene. Anna the housemaid enters the bedroom. Mrs. Chase gets out of bed and walks to the bathroom sink.

Viewers may perceive a lot of gaps in these images. This is because the camera doesn't always show the entire room. For instance, the camera's purpose is to frame a woman character, the chair next to her may be cropped. Over the nurse's shoulder, the rest of the chair may not be revealed.

When drawing from life, Dawn draws what is seen on the screen and, more, however, she sometimes shows contracts elements. For instance, in the drawing Mrs. Jessica Chase's home's My representation of the kitchen above, the wallpaper was an active pattern and wallpaper which was excluded from the drawing. In the case of that particular work, the interest was in drawing the path of the characters' actions in the scene. Anna the housemaid enters the bedroom. Mrs. Chase gets out of bed and walks to the bathroom sink.

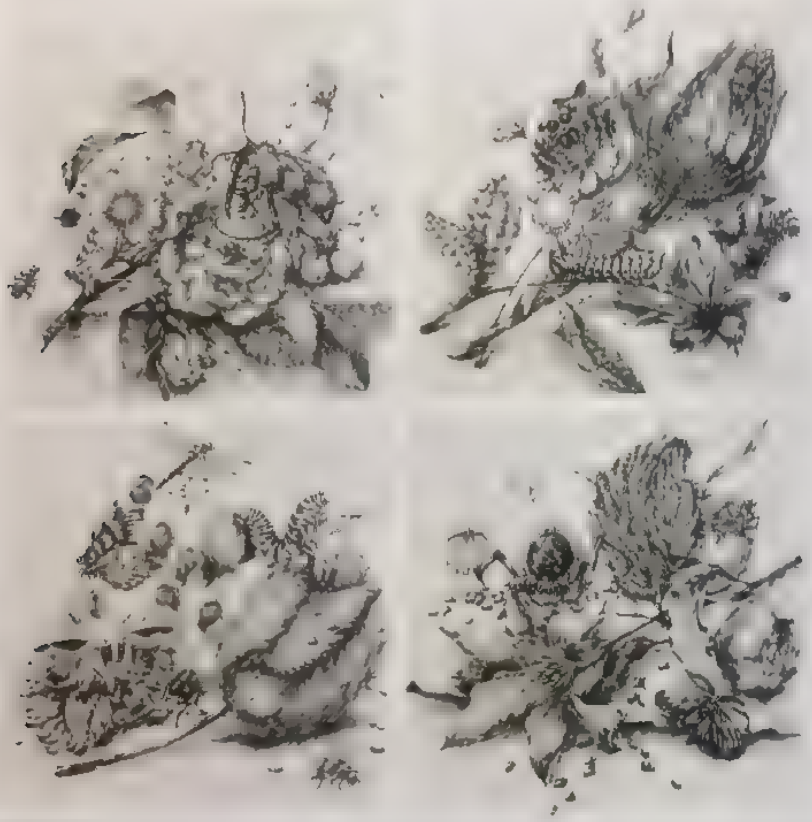
DRAWING FROM REFERENCE VERSUS DRAWING FROM LIFE

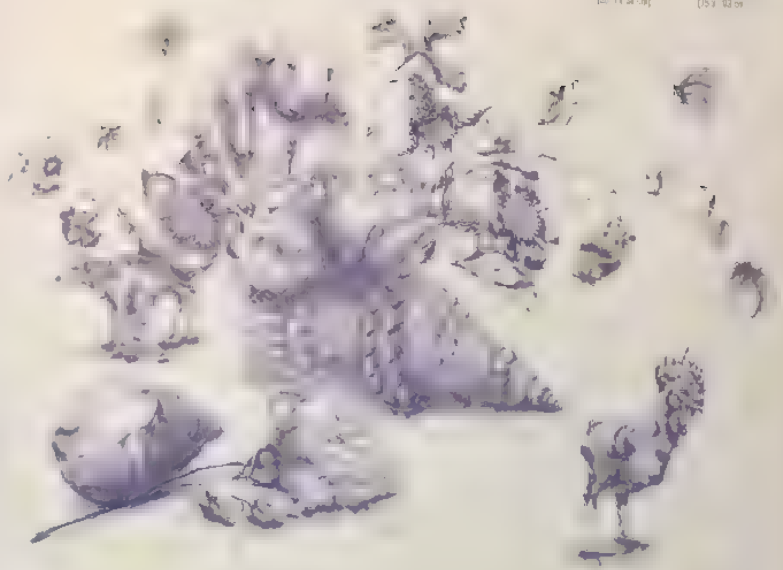
There is a huge difference between drawing from life, a photograph or a representation of life, and an direct physical observation. When drawing from a photograph or from a video monitor or projected image, the object Dawn's drawing is the two image, not a three dimensional person, object, or place. A simple photograph is a flat object with an image on it. When drawing from a photograph, she does not invent or add to the image. She only draws what the photograph provides. So, in a photograph, a black shape, expression, a shadow under a table, a shape, a black shape, an abstract image of an hand or a leg, a very dark shadow, where, using the side of the chair, can be looked at more closely, a light can be used on to see what is in the shape in the shadow.

FEATURED ARTIST:

JOO LEE KANG

JOO LEE KANG'S HIGHLY DETAILED [illegible] MO[illegible] EVIDENCE CLASSICAL MOTIFS FROM VICTORIAN NATURALIST AND DECORATIVE STYLES AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURY DUTCH STILL LIFES. SHE REINTERPRETS THE WAY ARTISTS HAVE HISTORICALLY OBSERVED NATURAL PHENOMENA AND PLANT AND ANIMAL LIFE AS A FORM OF DOCUMENTATION TRANSFORMING THEM INTO HIGHLY ALLEGORICAL IMAGES CONCERNED WITH THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY'S RELATIONSHIP WITH, AND MANIPULATION OF, THE NATURAL WORLD.





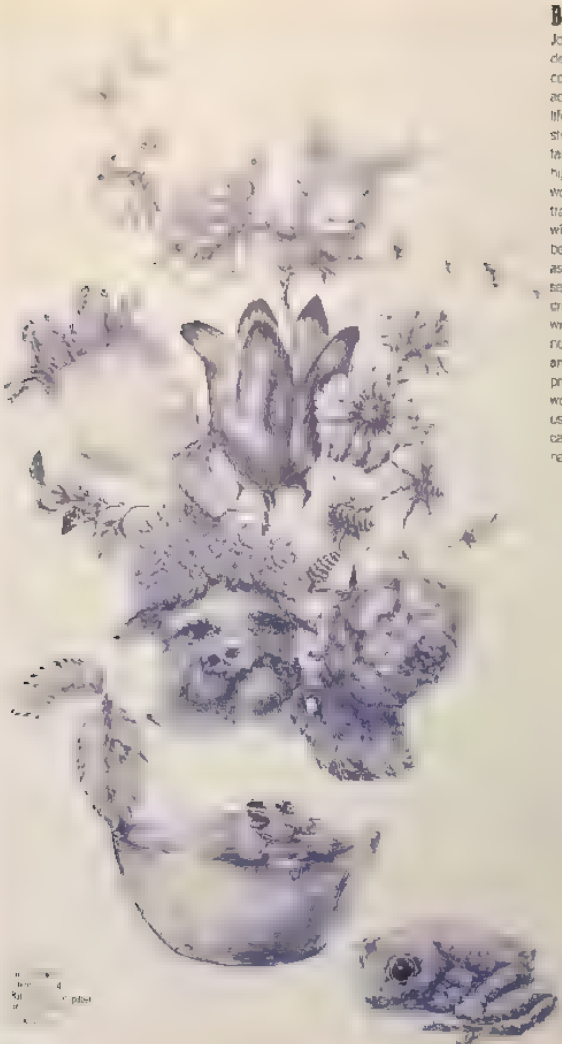
At a distance, her labor-intensive, cross-hatched plants and animals and her elaborate wallpaper patterns (inspired by late nineteenth-century British decorative arts) relate to both a sense of nostalgia and a desire to document a taxonomy of insects, flowers, fish, farm animals, seashells, and more. Closer inspection reveals nature in flux, a grotesque hybrid of evolution and manipulation. Crossbred animals and genetically modified mutants are disguised by her elegant, delicate treatment of these subjects.

ART TRADITIONS

Joo Lee expresses a strong interest in art history, which was a large part of her education in school. Both the naturalists and the decorative artists represent a sort of non-fine art, or an art that serves a purpose beyond its own existence (the naturalist to educate, and the decorative artist for interior decoration). This is an important reference point for understanding Joo Lee's work. The decorative quality, especially with her use of wallpaper, initially disguises her interest in the human relationship with science and nature. From a distance, the works look like benign decorative pieces. On closer inspection, the natural world is in a state of metamorphosis imposed by the hand of modern science.

Although Joo Lee's inspiration largely comes from classical subjects, the images themselves are drawn from references of plants and animals taken from science and nature magazines, websites, and books. The creatures she produces from these references are purely from her imagination. The staging of the composition relies on her love of classical still lifes.

EXPLORING TECHNIQUE: BUILDING UP THE DRAWING



BALLPOINT REFLECTIONS

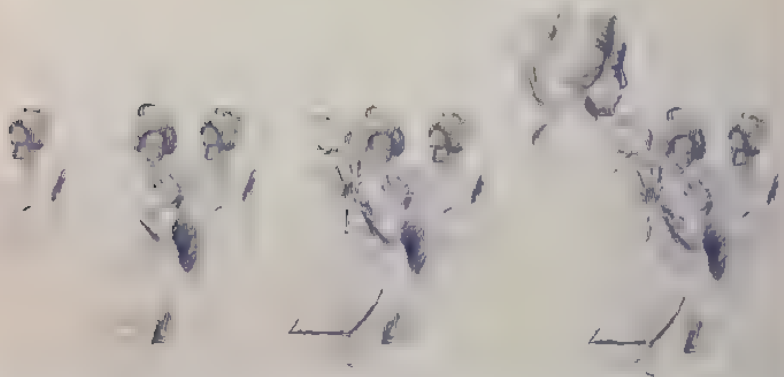
Joo Lee's adoption of ballpoint pen developed from her interest in it as a convenient tool for sketching. It has an accessibility that lent itself well to her lifestyle at the time. She was an international student and was traveling a lot, so she could take the pen and work anywhere, as it is highly portable and maintenance-free. She would use it to draw in her sketchbook, later translating those drawings into paintings with gouache, watercolor, and graphite. She began to ask herself, "Why use ballpoint as just a sketch tool, why not as a more serious art tool?" As she began to use it to create more finished works, she fell in love with the properties she was discovering: non-erasable, good for building up layers and beautiful tones. The fine line articulates precise detail, an important aspect of her work that relates back to the naturalists' use of drawing as a means of scientifically cataloging the physical characteristics of natural forms.

Image Highlight
Bernie Fischer
Ink, Mount, W
Pen and ink on canvas
9 x 7½ inches
48.5 x 66 cm

EXERCISE

MULTIPLE VIEWPOINTS OF ONE OBJECT

THE OUTCOME OF THIS EXERCISE



EXERCISE:

360-DEGREE VIEW OF A ROOM

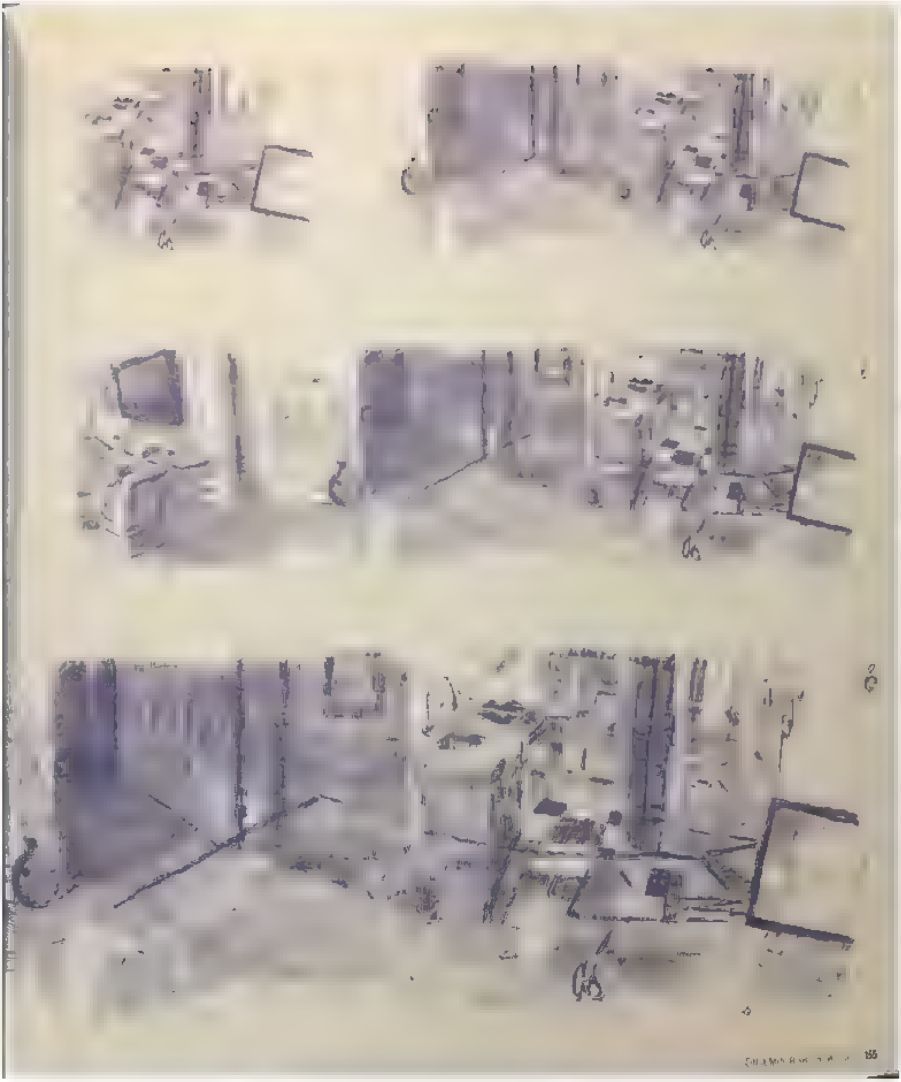
THE OBJECT OF THIS EXERCISE IS TO CONTINUE TO ADD TO A COMPOSITION. YOU'LL START AT THE LEFT EDGE OF THE PAGE AND WORK RIGHT, CONTINUING TO ADD PAPER TO THE COMPOSITION AS THE DRAWING EXPANDS FURTHER THROUGH.

The drawing should be done in a room, and the objective is to turn in a 360-degree rotation to capture the entire space. Do not plan the drawing first, and start with pen directly on the paper, without a pencil sketch.

Each page should be completed before adding [illegible] discouraged here. Focus only on moving across the page: think of the paper as a scroll and the drawing, like writing, as if you were writing across the page and describing what you see.

The point is to not to be able to plan ahead, but to treat the drawing as a pure documentation, to draw only what is seen from that particular angle. This organic process, rather than planning, determines the composition.

Although each page directly [illegible] the last one, lined up as a continuation of the previous drawing.

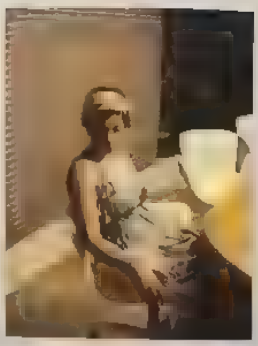


EXERCISE:

ONE MARK

[illegible]

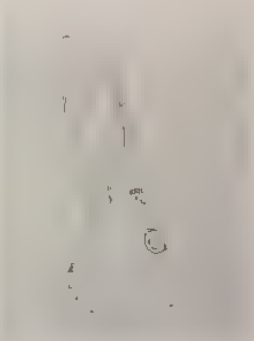
[illegible]



EXERCISE

DRAWING TEXTURE

DRAWING TEXTURE ON AN OBJECT CAN BE INTERPRETED AS ASSIGNING A MARK THAT CAN INDICATE THE SURFACE QUALITY. THE MARK CAN BE USED TO DESCRIBE THE VOLUME AND SHAPE OF THE OBJECT. TEXTURE HELPS DIFFERENTIATE OBJECTS, SO FOR CLARITY IN A DRAWING, BEING PARTICULAR IN ASSIGNING A MARK TO DESCRIBE AN OBJECT WILL MAKE THE OBJECT FEEL UNIQUE. USING THE SAME MARK THROUGHOUT A DRAWING, OVER MANY OBJECTS, CAN GIVE THE WORK UNIFORMITY, LIKE EVERYTHING IS MADE OUT OF THE SAME MATERIAL.



Drawing [illegible] fur of a [illegible] with [illegible] [illegible] for the [illegible] looking [illegible] mark [illegible] be made to [illegible] the shape [illegible] that [illegible] of the shadows on the [illegible] [illegible] indicated [illegible] the hair [illegible] shadow. While you draw [illegible] shadow.

Experiment with the material before starting the drawing. [illegible] ways of using the shaping and texture. The [illegible] on the mark [illegible] describe how the surface [illegible] averaging them densely [illegible] darker [illegible] that [illegible] the down. The [illegible] the stroke describes smooth [illegible] drawing [illegible] makes. [illegible] are examples of [illegible] are will be used to create [illegible]

Begin by drawing the structural drawing features such as the [illegible] eyebrow [illegible] furhood and the [illegible]. Treat hair like its wrapping around the surface. [illegible] and draw [illegible] the surface [illegible] in mind [illegible] define its angle. The shadow will make more sense once the form is defined.

Once the form is drawn, continue to spread the fur over the face, rendering the shadows. Layer the marks closer together to make the shadows darker. Avoid adding any marks for hair in the lightest area, even if you see it when examining the subject.

It may help to squint while looking at the rabbit so that the detail will disappear and the texture won't be visible. Look at the shapes, the dark portions that cover the surface, and describe the fur in those areas.

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